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By John le Carré

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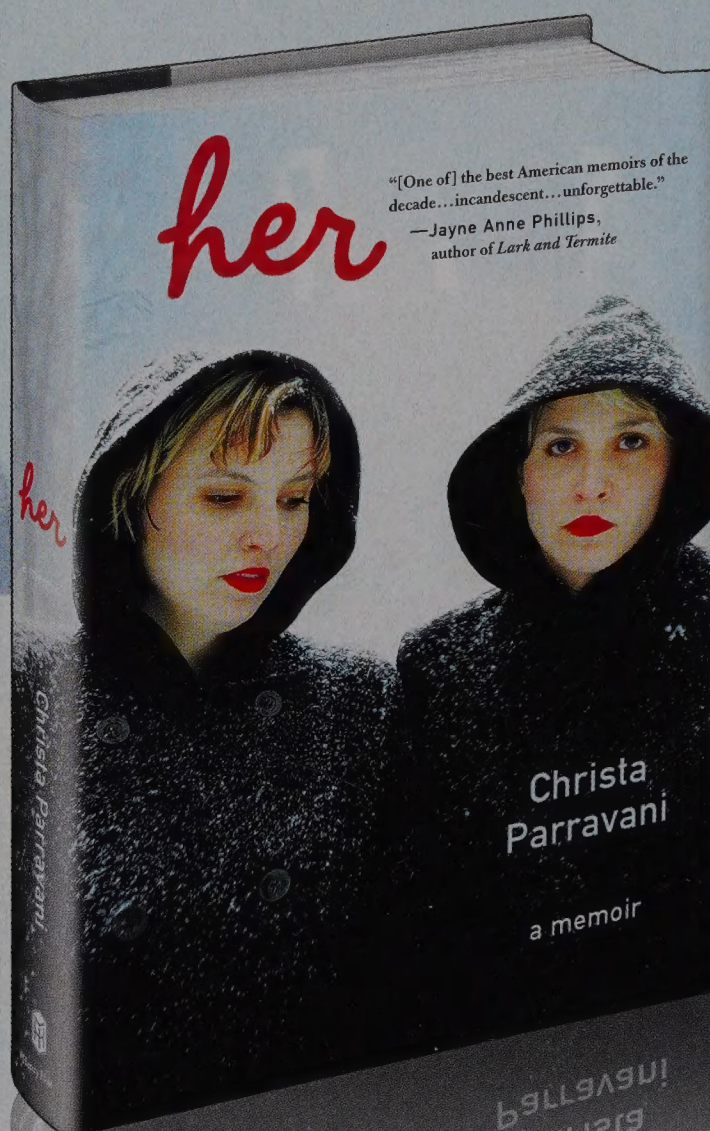
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LETTERS

Workers Undocumented

In his report ["This Land Is Not Your Land," February], Ted Genoways indicts a few citizens and politicians in Nebraska as a stand-in for the discrimination perpetrated by the whole country. He devotes just one paragraph to the plight of U.S. workers displaced by low-wage foreigners, choosing instead to focus on immigrants in the town of Fremont. But Raul Vazquez, whose struggles are a major part of the article, is himself an American citizen. The question is who is victimizing him. The hiring of undocumented workers, who are championed by both middle-class liberals and the large corporations that profit from their labor—Cargill, Hormel, Tyson, et al.—quite often cheapens the jobs of other minorities and of legal immigrants. The real story is that importing and exploiting cheap labor is just one facet of the total dismantling of

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the last vestiges of an industry-labor social compact. It is, as such, a fundamentally un-American activity.

Jerry Bronk
San Francisco

Casus Belli Frigidi

In his review of Anne Applebaum's *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe, 1944-1956* ["Red States," February], Michael Scammell provides further documentation of the brutality and viciousness of Stalin's Soviet Union, especially to its own, and of the ruling elites in Poland, Hungary, and East Germany who zealously carried out the wishes and policies of their masters. But these facts are less relevant to an analysis of the Cold War than is the question of whether Stalinist policies were prima facie evidence of a Soviet desire for world domination. Did they justify the worldwide presence of the American military and CIA, and U.S. nuclear development as the Soviet nuclear program was just beginning? Despite a lack of evidence, some are determined to view early U.S. nuclear-weapons policy as canny foresight of the Soviet

Union's actions rather than as their proximate cause.

James Leigh
Høvik, Norway

Like Applebaum, Scammell dismisses the idea that the Cold War was caused "not by communist expansion but by the American drive for open international markets." Evidence for this theory can be found in the events leading up to Hiroshima rather than in the later period on which Applebaum focuses in her book. One example not disputed but simply ignored involves the Polish atomic scientist Joseph Rotblat, who joined the Manhattan Project in 1944 as a member of the British team. Rotblat recalled later that in March of that year, three months before D-Day, General Leslie Groves, director of the project, told him that "the real objective of building the bomb was, of course, to subdue the Soviet Union." Rotblat resigned from his post at the end of 1944, devoted the rest of his life to nuclear disarmament, and was rewarded for his efforts, in 1995, with the Nobel Peace Prize.

H. Neal Collins
Calgary

Van Dough

Kabir Chibber ignores an important question implicitly posed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in its decision to tax sculptures and installations as the sums of their materials instead of as artworks ["Blind Appraisal," Annotation, February]. The judgment presented the art world with an opportunity to discuss the nature and boundaries of art, but the galleries involved instead approached it as a question of money. The tribunal was about more than whether particular materials constitute art. It asked who gets to decide what art is, and the art world failed to make its case to the broader public.

Matthew Irwin
Austin, Tex.

Depth of Field

The recent portfolio of Garry Winogrand's late work ["An Obsessive Embrace," February] confirms my opinion that he was the quintessential photographer of the late twentieth century. He was driven by the need to see what the world looked like as a photograph, and as Lyle Rexer suggests in his accompanying essay, Winogrand's work is a precursor to the continuous narrative of imagery now streaming on

social networks. A catalogue of every photograph he ever took would be a handbook for seeing and knowing ourselves. The thousand words a single picture is worth don't tell us nearly as much as the hundreds of thousands generated by Winogrand's masterful oeuvre.

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EASY CHAIR

Broken English
By Thomas Frank

The radio was tuned to NPR, the subject was austerity, and the great observers of our political moment were speaking with their customary authority. The conversation wandered to and fro, and then I heard David Leonhardt, the Washington bureau chief of the *New York Times*, declare that when it came to cut-backs in federal spending, “history just argues incredibly strongly against it.”

I knew what Leonhardt meant: Austerity is a bad idea. And I agreed with him. Still, somehow his statement annoyed me. What grated, I soon realized, was his image of history “arguing” for or against something. There are, of course, lots of illustrious metaphors for the sweep of events: History is like a train, bearing us relentlessly down its tracks; history is like a nightmare from which we cannot awaken. Or you could make up your own: History is like a comfortable warm bath in received wisdom, or like a thousand-plane bombing raid on idealism.

One thing that history *isn't*, however, is a pundit, arguing for this course of action or that. History doesn't come chirping about its bright ideas; history doesn't put on a solid midtone tie and appear on CNN; history doesn't really give a damn what becomes of us.

But why should this bother me? Can it really matter which particular turns of phrase a journalist chooses, especially when he's making off-the-cuff statements into a microphone at a radio station? I have myself said plenty of stupid things under those

conditions. But as Leonhardt continued to work this vein, my irritation mounted. “It is possible to say,” he said, “that the argument for austerity now is one that is very weak when you look at the economic and historical evidence.”

What pundits say does matter. The words they use may seem deliberately chosen to express nothing, or to convey a simple thought in a roundabout way, but those words matter nonetheless. Such observers have worked hard learning to talk this way, and their relentless use of exhausted, empty metaphors has a precise meaning all its own.

In a famous essay published sixty-seven years ago, George Orwell declared that the clichés of the day were a product of contemporary politics. The only way people could absorb the awful events of World War II, he wrote, was to hear them camouflaged with nonsense. And so the English language was being ruined with passive constructions, threadbare similes, ways of saying things that burned up the syllables yet signified nothing.

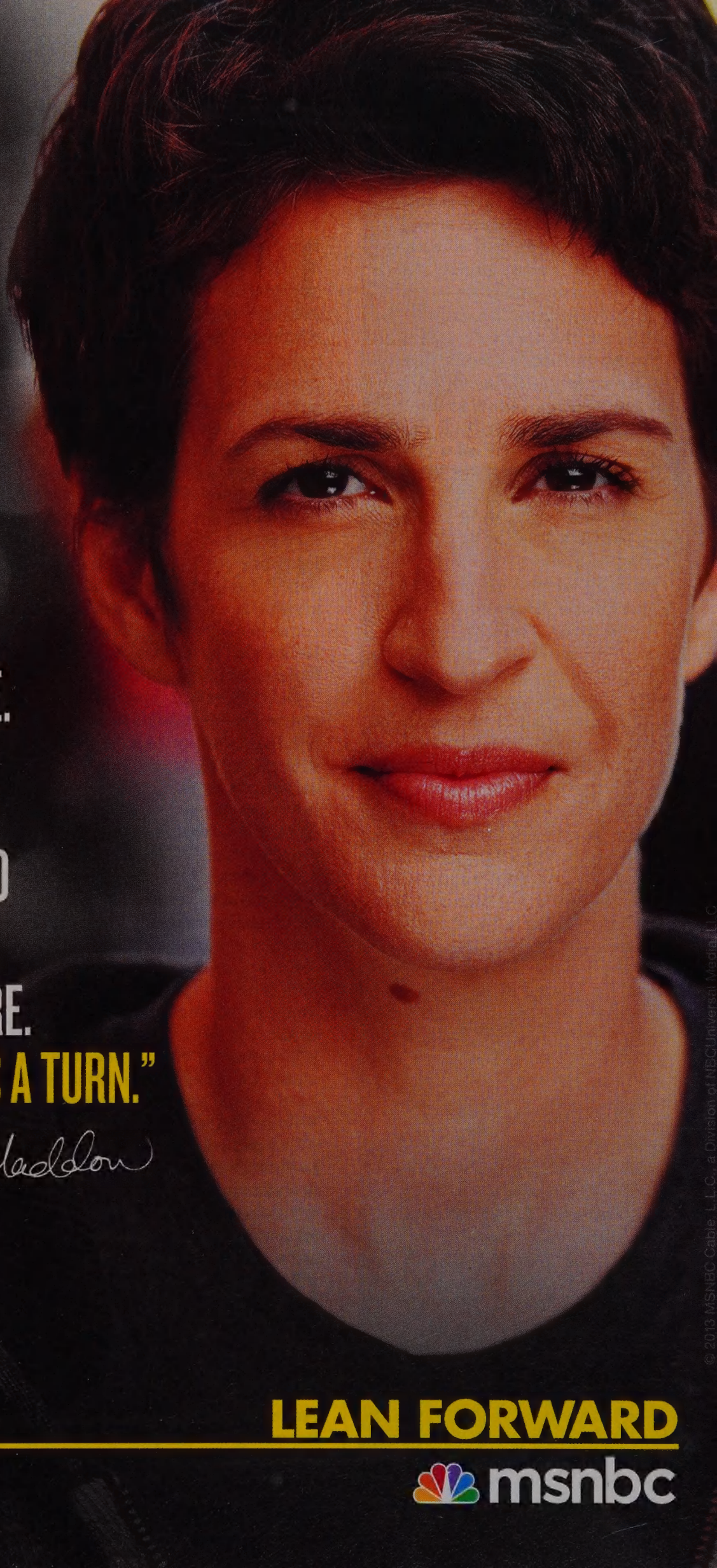
The ruination goes on today, although for slightly different reasons. Take this business, now a sort of epidemic, of presenting everything as an “argument.” People in the land of professional commentary no longer believe things or propose things or even assert things; they argue them.

I'm familiar with this particular cliché formation because in the early 1980s, when my friends and I were high school debaters, we talked this

way all the time. Arguments were what allowed us to keep score back in those days: one team argued for something, the other team argued against it, and the argument was won or lost. But high school debate was a game—a game for teenagers. The point wasn't for an individual debater to *believe* any particular argument and win the room over with the radiance of his faith; it was for him to be able to argue *anything*. Insincerity was essential.

For the commentator class, the usage has a similar distancing effect. It's a kind of shortcut to objectivity, and suggests that the pundit in question doesn't actually believe something—oh heavens no—but is merely reporting that the belief might be held by someone, somewhere. So when Nina Easton appears on Fox News and says (in a sentence I have chosen for its utter averageness) that “one could argue that Barack Obama's smartest political move was putting Hillary Clinton in his Cabinet so that she wasn't outside with Bill Clinton causing mischief,” she isn't actually asserting this as the truth. She's only reporting that one *might* assert this, were one so inclined.

Modifying “argue” with “could” or “would,” as Easton does here, distances the wise person even further from the forbidden stuff of opinion. For example, after relating certain facts about Ronald Reagan's presidency and his many, many vacations, MSNBC host Chris Matthews in 2011 reasoned that critics of President Obama's vacations were being unfair—and then deftly used


A close-up portrait of Rachel Maddow, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She has short, dark, wavy hair and is wearing a dark top. The background is dark and out of focus.

**"THE ONLY PEOPLE
SAYING WE CANNOT
REFORM OUR GUN
LAWS ARE THE
GUN INDUSTRY AND
THE PEOPLE WHO
BELIEVE THEIR HYPE.**

**BUT THEY'RE NOT
THE ONLY ONES WHO
GET TO SPEAK ON
THIS ISSUE ANYMORE.
NOW EVERYONE HAS A TURN."**

-Rachel Maddow

LEAN FORWARD

 **msnbc**

conditional voodoo to nix everything he had just said. “Presidents have always been taking vacations,” he reminded viewers, “and complaining about it amounts to a little more than partisan carping, one could argue.”

Could one, now? In this instance, it is easy to see the pundit’s cherished distance as a simple verbal trick, a disappearing act. But now let us observe the cliché at work in a different setting, where politics is not the subject and the effect is genuinely confusing. Taking to the NPR airwaves in September 2012, the author Junot Díaz described a character in *one of his own books* like this: “What we’re left with is a character who, for the first time in his life, I would argue, is capable of being in a normal relationship.”

Here we seem to be witnessing a deliberate and extraordinary divorce of speaker from subject. After all, who knows the development and the mental state of Díaz’s character better than Díaz himself? He labored over this short-story collection for sixteen years. Surely he can indulge in a little straight talk about his own creation without carefully leaving himself a rhetorical escape hatch.

Why, aside from its magical distancing properties, do people cling to this off-putting construction? Because it cues the audience to the presence of a professional; and professionals are complicated, painstaking people—they don’t simply assert things but instead argue for them in high-minded settings like legal briefs and scholarly journals. Arguing for things, or (better) announcing that you *would* argue for them given certain conditions, is how enlightened people are supposed to speak.

This seems like the only plausible explanation for the following assessment of the band Yo La Tengo by the critic Milo Miles. Speaking to *Fresh Air* listeners, he notes: “But if they lack rock dramatics, I would argue that the group knows as much about the modes and manners of rock ‘n’ roll as anyone who has ever played the music.”

The point here is not really Yo La Tengo’s unexcelled expertise in rock genre conventions (though that is no doubt a fascinating matter) but rath-

er the expertise of the critic himself, who can both judge a band and also avoid any hint of judgmental finality. His opinion is not to be stated, it is to be argued. That is how professionals talk when they talk about rock. Maybe.

If contingency and professional delicacy are one pole of the pundit argot, the other is streetwise toughness—or, rather, streetwise toughness as it is imagined by a high-ranking social order of one of the richest cities in America. And so the commentariat speak of “running the table” when they mean a definitive victory, thereby letting the world know they are intimate with the ways of pool sharks. Or they describe a politician’s debate performance with the phrase “rope-a-dope,” establishing in passing their knowledge of everyone’s all-time favorite boxing match, the 1974 Rumble in the Jungle between George Foreman and Muhammad Ali.

But for badass bluster, nothing comes close to “lay down a marker,” a phrase pundits use to indicate leadership of the most resolute, thrilling variety. When that archetypal Washington tough guy Dick Cheney addressed the subject of nuclear proliferation in a 2011 Fox News interview, he imparted a quiet, Dirty Harry menace to the words. “There have to be meaningful consequences,” intoned the former vice president. “If you are going to lay down a marker and say don’t proliferate nuclear-weapons technology to the terror-sponsoring state, you have to mean it.” (Appearing on Fox News the previous year, Cheney’s daughter Liz issued an identical warning to WikiLeaks enthusiasts: “I think that you’ve got to lay down a marker here so that people understand it’s not freedom of the press.”)

For some, however, tossing markers around is a more personal thing, an act you perform to show that you’ve got the mettle for the big job. When someone is running for president, declared Mark McKinnon on MSNBC’s *Hardball* in 2009, “the important thing is to get in and lay down a marker early and be a player.” And sometimes it even means taking a stand against rampant stand-takers.

“Lay down a marker, then,” said George Stephanopoulos on ABC News in 2004, daring John McCain to step up after the Arizona senator had expressed concern about partisan polarization. “How do you think both President Bush and Senator Kerry should conduct this campaign to avoid what you worry about?”

What kind of marker? A lime-green Sharpie? And why lay it down if they want the world to see it? As far as I can tell, the precise origin of the metaphor is never acknowledged by the confident men who throw it around so promiscuously. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has little to say on the subject. In his *New York Times* On Language column in 1990, William Safire speculated that the “marker” in question derived from gambling slang as set down in the books and stories of Damon Runyon; it means a debt or an IOU.

I will go Safire one better. The specific Runyon-based work in which a marker is a fetish object representing a man’s honor is, of course, *Guys and Dolls*. In the celebrated movie adaptation of that musical, the gambler Nathan Detroit utters this famous line: “A marker is the one pledge which a guy cannot welsh on, never.” To doubt a man’s marker, he continues, is unthinkable—“it’s like not saluting the flag.” In the movie’s climactic scene, after the characters dance in their colorful costumes and Marlon Brando sings, the gamblers actually lay down markers for their eternal souls—a move that eventually obliges them to attend church services at a nearby storefront mission.

“Worn-out metaphors” was one of George Orwell’s main categories of cliché—collections of words that “have lost all evocative power and are merely used because they save people the trouble of inventing phrases for themselves.” To “lay down a marker” is obviously one of these, a burned-out husk of a phrase that must once have seemed exciting and even raffish, and that today rolls off the tongue almost unconsciously.

But it’s worse than this. What does it tell us about our political class that its favorite source for lexical toughness is a wholesome musical often performed in high schools? Or that our

leaders believe they are connecting with average Americans when they mimic the patois of made-up New York gangsters?

In certain high-stakes situations, even laying down a marker is insufficiently flinty. When the opinion managers need to describe politicians in the act of criticizing one another, for example, they look not to loud-suited palookas but to bayonet practice, and instead of the passive voice we get green-screen gore.

The term in question is “eviscerate.” When the Fox News host Sean Hannity wanted to show his enthusiasm for Paul Ryan as a vice-presidential pick, he bumbled about how Ryan had “eviscerate[d] Obama at the health-care summit.” On CNN, meanwhile, Piers Morgan wondered whether Ryan would live up to his reputation as a deadly debater: “Crystal, you really think Paul Ryan is going to eviscerate Joe Biden?”

But in an NPR report on a 2011 speech by President Obama, it was Ryan himself who served as the practice dummy. Three times in the course of the report, Mara Liasson and her colleagues noted that the Wisconsin representative (or, alternately, his ideas) had been eviscerated by the clever president. Up to now, Liasson explained, Obama “was basically playing rope-a-dope, but this was their strategy, and you can see it working... He was able to eviscerate Ryan.”

The term applies to intramural debates as well, as Steve Schmidt reminded MSNBC viewers last year, speculating about the tactics of former House Speaker Newt Gingrich in the impending G.O.P. presidential debates. “Is he going to be the tip of the spear for the anti-Romney?” asked Schmidt. “Is he going to go into these debates and try to eviscerate Mitt Romney? It’s the plot of an old western.”

I don’t know of any cowboy movie in which disembowelment is used to settle a quarrel. (Had Schmidt said “an old samurai film,” he might have had a point.) Seriously, this is a grisly act. Eviscerating a moose or even a squirrel is a messy business; eviscerating a human is an act of torture, war, bloody murder. And yet our thought leaders—

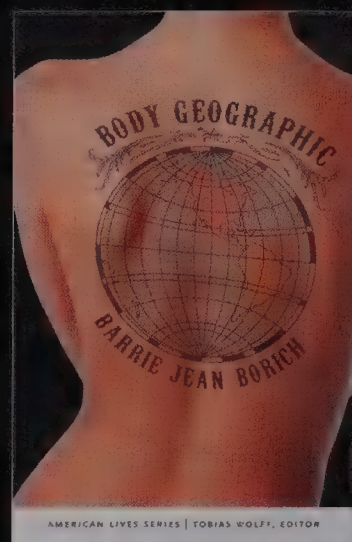
people who shush their neighbors in the Quiet Car and fill their air-conditioned homes with fake Chippendale fripperies—never seem to consider the literal meaning of their favorite worn-out metaphor. In fact, the only person I have come across in my research who has shown the slightest discomfort with it is Gingrich, the former college professor, who claimed during the 2012 primaries that his enemies

held a meeting on Sunday morning after a Saturday-night primary, and they said, “We have to destroy Gingrich.” One of them was even quoted in the *New York Times* as saying, “We have to eviscerate him,” which I felt was a fairly strong word in a Republican primary. I would expect Obama’s people to do that, but I thought it was a tad much, having spent my entire career building the Republican Party.

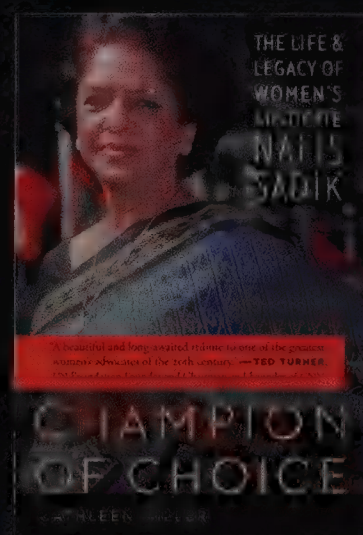
Well, reader, we’ve exhausted our space for this month without even going into “optics,” a term knowledgeable Washingtonians use for what you and I would call “appearance.” We haven’t talked about the way politicians are said to “throw red meat” to their supporters or “leverage off of” something. We haven’t mentioned “nonstarters,” meaning policy suggestions not fit for consideration, or “the extremes,” the places such suggestions originate. We haven’t considered the great sport of baseball, whose mystic rhythms connect every political commentator in America to the honest folk of the countryside. Nor have we explored the tired phrases that rise to my own lips whenever a microphone draws near: “narrative,” “red state,” “double down.”

But we have seen enough to understand that the goal of the pundit cliché is to define and defend the class position of the pundit, to distinguish between the exalted them and the vast, sweating world of not-them. One part of this specialized vocabulary points toward elitism, the other toward blaring pseudopopulism, but if examined closely, both parts give away the game. This lingo is the jittery patter of a would-be democratic aristocracy, utterly incapable of introspection and yet better than the rest of us in every way. ■

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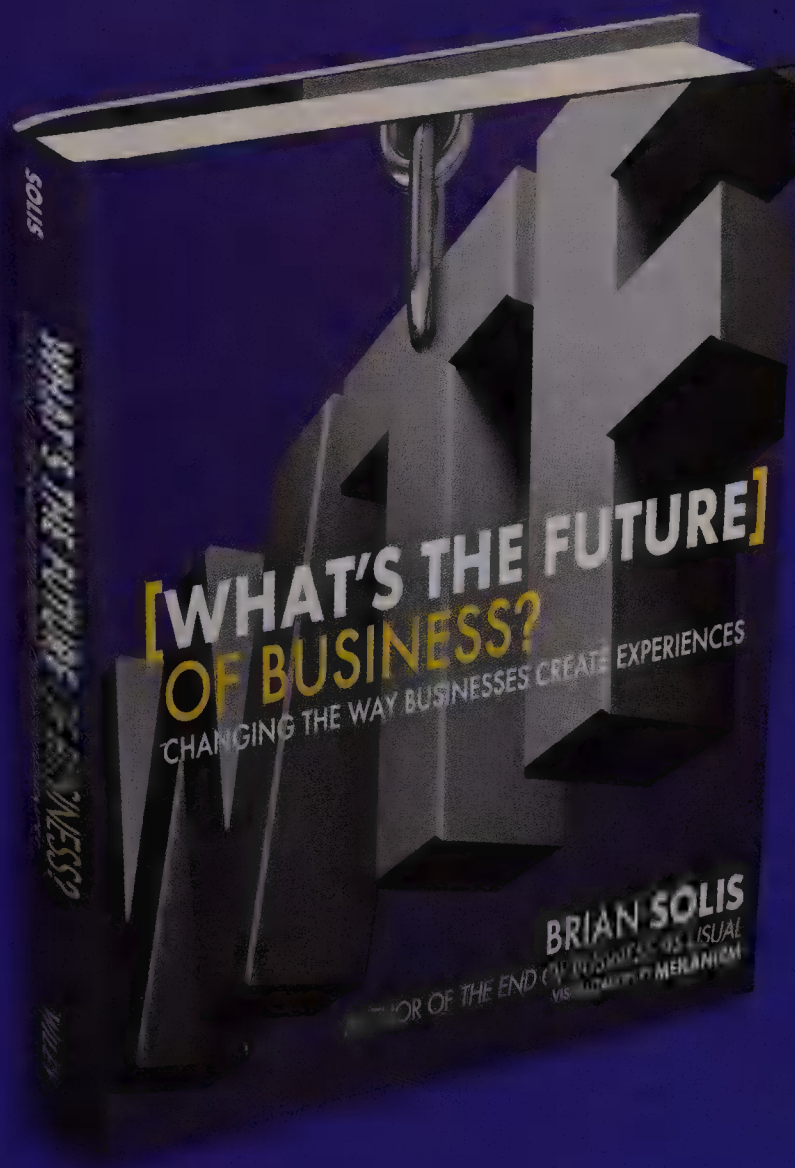
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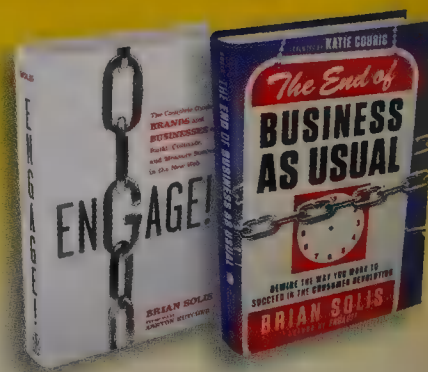
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THE ANTI-ECONOMIST

A Bit of Good News

By Jeff Madrick

It's dangerous to express optimism about the economy these days. Europe's financial markets remain fragile. China, which supports much of the world's economy through imports, is too dependent on highly indebted, state-subsidized corporations. The Federal Reserve may reverse its low-interest-rate policy. Nevertheless, there is at last some fundamentally positive economic news to be reported: the United States may be on the verge of GDP growth rapid enough to bring down the unemployment rate substantially.

The nation's debt as a percentage of GDP has stabilized and is forecast to begin falling in 2015, while consumer debt has already dropped significantly since the financial crisis set in. Research by the Harvard economists Kenneth Rogoff and Carmen Reinhart shows that recessions caused by financial bubbles take a longer time to recover from, as governments and consumers pay off debt rather than spending. This has certainly been true since the collapse of the housing bubble. But there is reason to believe that U.S. households and government have returned themselves to manageable levels of debt.

Following major spending cuts and modest tax increases, the federal deficit is now running at about 5 percent of GDP, compared with 10 per-

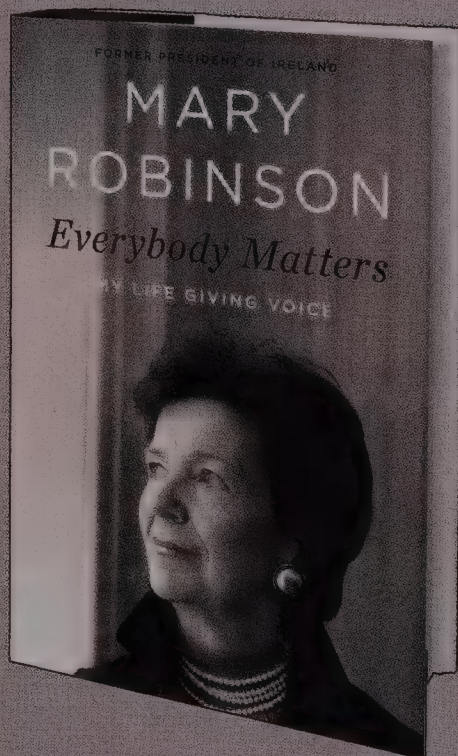
cent in 2009. In 2013, the deficit will fall below the trillion-dollar mark, and the recent round of planned cuts and tax changes may already have put us back on a sustainable path. Meanwhile, health-care costs—the principal factor in projected increases in Medicare and Medicaid spending over the next decade, and especially beyond—have for four years been rising more slowly than expected, prompting the “nonpartisan” Congressional Budget Office to knock several hundred billion dollars off its federal-deficit projections for 2020. This is considerably more than reforms proposed by President Obama or Congress would achieve. In the long run, the beneficial consequences of slow growth in health-care costs could be far greater. The CBO now figures that the nation's debt will for the foreseeable future remain slightly above 70 percent of GDP, which most economists believe to be an acceptable level.

Some influential Republicans are now noticeably more subdued on the deficit front than they were during last year's presidential election or during the 2011 debt-ceiling debacle. In late January, a top Republican adviser and former aide to House majority leader Eric Cantor wrote on Twitter that “conservatives would be wise to focus on economic growth and job creation in-

stead of austerity/cuts alone.” A few weeks later, Cantor made a speech at the conservative American Enterprise Institute in which he attempted to divert attention away from budget issues and toward education and health care. After Congress and the president conclude another seemingly unavoidable fight this spring about raising the legal debt limit—a serious threat, because failure to do so could lead to defaults on Treasury debt—the deficit wars may be just about over. That would mean much less of a headwind for the economy.

More important than any government news, however, is the fact that the U.S. consumer is once again financially pretty healthy. In the 2000s, Americans took on huge amounts of debt—mortgages to finance their new houses; home-equity loans to buy appliances, pay for college, and take vacations; credit card debt to cover everyday needs. Debt, not rising wages, is what kept the economy running through most of the Bush years. It masked a systemic weakness that most economists warned us about too late. Household debt service—the amount required in a given period to pay both interest and debt principal—reached more than 14 percent of after-tax income in 2007, just before the Great Recession was to get under way.

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In the past couple of years, consumers have been paying off these debts. The Federal Reserve has kept interest rates low. Even as levels of some types of borrowing, such as college loans, remain high, overall debt service is down to about 10.5 percent of income, the lowest it's been since 1981. As a result, consumers are likely to start spending again, businesses to start investing—the virtuous circle that drives economic growth.

A rebound in housing is a key component of full-fledged economic recovery. Though reductions in debt levels and interest payments don't always mean that consumers will start buying big-ticket items like houses again, there is real evidence that just this is happening. Building permits are up strongly, while the inventory of unsold homes is down. (Foreclosed properties left fallow for several years are no longer salable—a sad fact, but one that reduces the inventory of houses available to be sold.) Purchases of furniture and appliances are also up. Construction companies' stock prices have risen sharply, and these companies are hiring workers. And, most important, housing prices are up 6 percent since bottoming out last winter.

Meanwhile, pent-up demand should continue to drive sales: younger Americans who postponed home-buying plans through their twenties, often moving in with their parents, have been able to save up the down payments needed to make a purchase.

Some interpret Rogoff and Reinhart's research to mean that a slow recovery from a debt bubble of the kind this country experienced is inevitable. But historically, failure to bounce back has been the result not of fate but of poor response. This time around, too, American policy was inadequate to the task. The \$800 billion stimulus passed in early 2009 was extremely useful, but the Obama Administration, like its predecessor, failed to pursue aggressive mortgage relief, even though the Troubled Asset Relief Program provided the tools and money to do so. After establishing the Home Affordable Mortgage Program, the adminis-

tration spent little of the \$50 billion set aside for mortgage relief; only about 1 million mortgages were modified. Had more mortgage holders been made whole, the economic recovery would have gathered steam more quickly.

Another policy failure was the Federal Reserve's continual focus on restraining inflation, an obsession it has had since the early 1980s. Most members of the Fed are focused instead on cutting the unemployment rate. As a result, even if inflation rises, Ben Bernanke and his colleagues are likely to keep interest rates low to promote job creation. The average rate on a thirty-year mortgage is around 3.5 percent, and it isn't likely to rise significantly in the next two to three years. Despite early warnings from such right-wing scholars as Niall Ferguson of Harvard and John Cochrane of the University of Chicago, there is no inflation to be found; economists at Goldman Sachs, among many others, believe inflation is not likely to reach the 2.5 percent threshold the Fed has now set anytime soon.

For a reduction in unemployment, GDP must grow fast enough to generate jobs for both those out of work and those newly entering the workforce. The growth of between 2 and 2.5 percent that we've had in recent years is clearly inadequate to this task. But it finally looks possible to generate 3 or even 4 percent growth, as Jan Hatzius of Goldman Sachs and Mark Zandi of Moody's Analytics are forecasting for the next couple of years. Josh Bivens of the Economic Policy Institute thinks it is plausible that a growth rate of 4.25 percent a year for several years in a row could get unemployment down close to 5 percent.

Even if these optimists are right, we should not count on the natural self-adjusting forces of the economy alone. In the short run, more fiscal stimulus will be needed. Ideally, increased federal spending would be directed to infrastructure. A recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco found that every dollar of federal highway grants a state receives increases that state's gross product by two dollars. Another

\$100 billion in annual infrastructure spending—a doubling of current federal authorizations—would make good sense. For this reason, the misguided “austerians” in Washington may be the single biggest threat to the kind of recovery that could bring down unemployment. As the deficit falls, fortunately, there ought to be less resistance to such public investment by fiscal hawks.

The most important thing the federal government can do to generate jobs may well be to reduce the nation’s trade deficit. The United States imports about \$500 billion more in goods and services each year than it exports. In February, the Economic Policy Institute released a study with another think tank that calculates that as much as four fifths of this deficit is caused by currency manipulation and government subsidies by major trading partners. Reducing these interventions, the study argues, could create roughly 2 to 5 million U.S. jobs, reducing unemployment by between 1 and 2.1 percent.

Given diplomatic sensitivities, it’s not likely the Obama Administration will take many of the steps the study suggests, such as refusing to sell U.S. bonds and other assets to trading partners unless they forgo manipulation. (Some countries have accused the Fed itself of manipulation, claiming its low-interest-rate policy is suppressing the U.S. dollar, making our exports more competitive.) But the administration doesn’t have to take so hard a stand; it could instead apply more pressure on these nations to raise wages and improve working conditions domestically. There are promising signs in this direction. Foxconn, the Chinese electronics-manufacturing giant, recently announced it would allow its workers to unionize.

Some among the antigovernment ideologues, deficit and inflation hawks, and trained economists who disparage government spending and investment insist that we will never have full employment because American workers don’t have the requisite skills. But the data shows

that worker shortages are in most sectors not serious, and there have been no substantial increases in wages, which would be the usual result of such shortages.

Rapid growth, encouraged by both fiscal and monetary policy in Washington and coupled with significant public investment in infrastructure, targeted investment in certain industries, and some measure of trade pressure, can get America back to full employment. With demand rising, investment will also rise—and the commercial innovation that may have been lying dormant because of slow growth, to say nothing of the investments wasted on housing since 2000, could then flourish.

After some rough sledding in the first half of the year due to spending cuts and tax hikes coming out of Washington, we may now be seeing the beginning of something the U.S. economy hasn’t witnessed in a generation: substantial growth based more on jobs and wage increases than on consumer debt. ■

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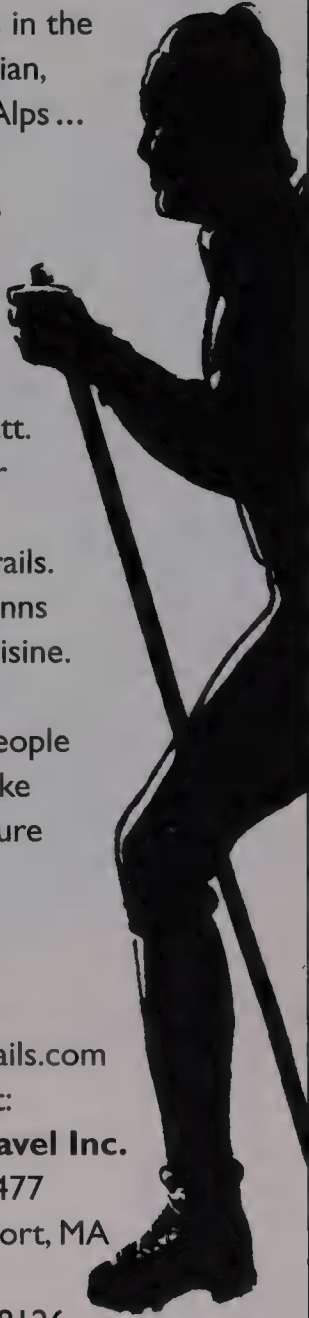
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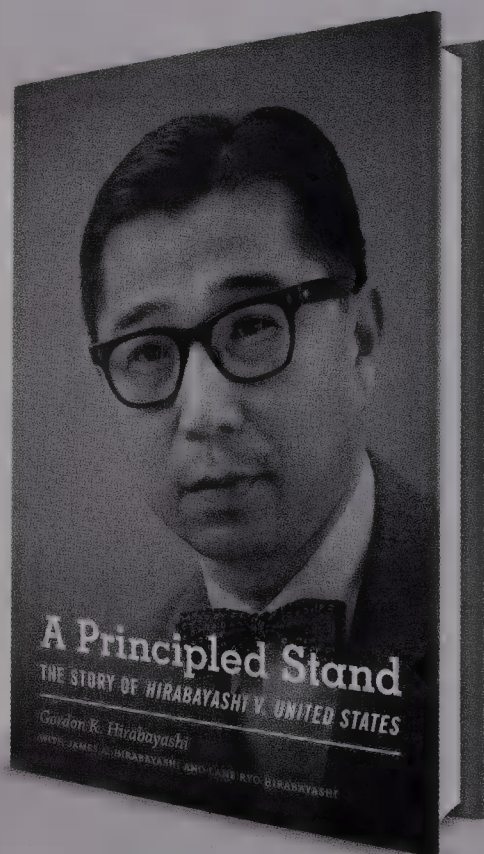
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HARPER'S INDEX

- Percentage of the U.S. population that is foreign-born : 13
 - Percentage that was foreign-born in 1913 : 15
- Change in the number of undocumented immigrants living in the United States since 2007 : -900,000
- Portion of Republicans who supported a “path to citizenship” in a February *Washington Post* poll : 3/5
 - Who supported the same policy when President Obama’s name was included in the question : 2/5
- Amount the Obama Administration spent on immigration enforcement last year : \$18,000,000,000
 - Amount the Justice Department spent on all law enforcement : \$12,400,000,000
- Percentage of U.S. Hispanics who “strongly disagree” with the statement that racism is “by and large a thing of the past” : 32
 - Of U.S. whites who do : 34
 - Of U.S. blacks : 58
- Number of Alabama jury-sentencing recommendations in capital cases that have been overturned by judges since 1976 : 110
- Number of those cases in which judges imposed the death penalty after juries recommended life in prison : 100
- Number of Egyptian police officers charged for attacks against civilians during the country’s revolution : 172
 - Number convicted : 2
- Portion of American gun deaths in 2011 that were suicides : 2/3
- Factor by which the NRA outspent all gun-control activist groups combined on lobbying in 2012 : 10
- Minimum number of people accidentally shot at gun shows on “Gun Appreciation Day” in January : 5
- Factor by which energy drink–related emergency-room visits have increased in the past eight years : 14
 - Number of reports of record-high temperatures by U.S. cities in 2012 : 362
 - Number of reports of record lows : 0
- Estimated weight in pounds of debris left on the moon by NASA : 36,600
- Rank of Canada among the largest producers of garbage per capita in the industrialized world : 1
 - Date on which Canada began withdrawing its penny from circulation : 2/4/2013
 - Estimated amount the withdrawal will save the government annually : \$11,000,000
- Estimated amount Sarah Palin was paid per word she spoke on air during her two-year Fox News contract : \$15.85
 - Chances that a U.S. worker doesn’t get paid sick leave : 2 in 5
- Percentage change since 1969 in the portion of U.S. schoolchildren who walk or bike to school : -76
- Pounds of candy given to each North Korean child in honor of Kim Jong Un’s birthday, according to state media : 2
 - Chance a North Korean child suffers from stunting due to chronic malnutrition : 1 in 3
 - Percentage increase in the number of college students in China since 1989 : 700
- Factor by which a recent college graduate in China is likelier than a peer with only elementary education to be unemployed : 4
 - Pollution level recorded on January 12 in Beijing on the Air Quality Index, a scale of zero to 500 : 755
 - Projected sales of “e-cigarettes” in the U.S. in 2013 : \$1,000,000,000
 - Percentage change since 1992 in the portion of U.S. women who diet : -32
- Percentage change since 2007 in the number of parenting books published annually in the United States : +27
 - Percentage of U.S. women who believe they have a personal responsibility to help the worse off : 42
 - Of U.S. men : 27
- Amount of pay increases the U.S. Treasury approved last year for executives at firms that received federal bailouts : \$6,162,208
 - Rank of chief executive officer among occupations most likely to attract psychopaths : 1

*Figures cited are the latest available as of February 2013. Sources are listed on page 102.
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A PRINCIPLED STAND

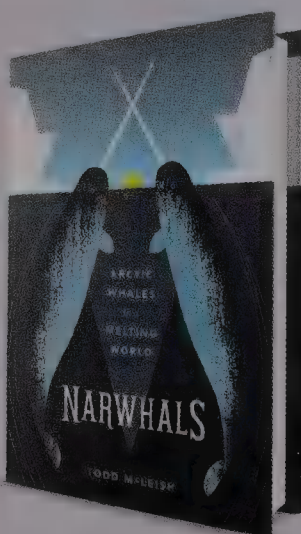
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WITH JAMES A. HIRABAYASHI AND LANE RYO HIRABAYASHI

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READINGS

[Essay]

PARENTHOOD REVISITED

By Claude Lévi-Strauss, from a 1986 lecture at the Ishizaka Foundation in Tokyo, included in *Anthropology Confronts the Problems of the Modern World*, published last month by Harvard University Press. Translated from the French by Jane Marie Todd.

The first imperative of a human society is to reproduce itself, to maintain itself over time. Every society therefore possesses a rule of filiation defining how each new member belongs to the group; a kinship system determining the way that relations will be classified, as kin by blood or by marriage; and rules stipulating whom a person can and cannot marry. Every society must also possess mechanisms to handle sterility.

The problem of sterility has become a pressing issue in Western societies, ever since the invention of artificial methods to assist in reproduction. It is now possible—or, for certain procedures, it will be possible in the near future—for a couple, one or both of whose members are infertile, to have children through the use of various methods: artificial insemination, egg donation, the use of surrogate mothers for hire or free of cost, the freezing of embryos, in vitro fertilization with sperm from the husband or from another man and with an egg from the wife or another woman.

The child born of such procedures may have one father and one mother as usual, or

one mother and two fathers, two mothers and one father, two mothers and two fathers, three mothers and one father, or even three mothers and two fathers, when the sperm donor is not the father and when three women participate: the one donating an egg, the one providing her uterus, and the one who will be the child's legal mother. We are also faced with situations where a woman asks to be inseminated with the frozen sperm of her deceased husband, or where two lesbians have a child together by taking the egg of one, artificially fertilized by an anonymous donor, and implanting it in the other woman's uterus. There is also no reason, it seems, why the frozen sperm of a great-grandfather could not be used a century later to fertilize a great-granddaughter. The child would then be his mother's granduncle and his own great-grandfather's half brother.

The problems that have arisen are of two orders, one legal in nature, the other psychological and moral. In terms of the first aspect, what will the respective rights and duties of the social and the biological parents be, now that they are different people? How should a court decide in a case where the surrogate mother delivers a disabled child and the couple that employed her services rejects it? Or if a woman inseminated by another's husband changes her mind and decides to keep the child as her own? Finally, can any of these practices, once they become possible, be freely employed, or must the law authorize some and prohibit others?

From a psychological and moral point of view, it seems that the essential question is one of transparency. Must sperm donors, egg donors,

and surrogates be anonymous, or can the social parents, and possibly the child herself, know the identity of those involved? Even countries that allow transparency seem to agree on the need to separate reproduction from sexuality, and even, as it were, from sensuality. To limit ourselves to the most simple case, public opinion judges sperm donation allowable only if it takes place in a laboratory and through the intervention of a doctor, an artificial method that excludes any personal contact, any sharing of emotions or eroticism between the donor and the receiver. And yet this preoccupation with having things take place anonymously seems to run counter to the universal situation, even in our own societies, in which that type of service is rendered “close to home”—albeit discreetly—more often than one would think. By way of example, let me cite an unfinished novel by Balzac that he began in 1843, a time when social prejudices were much stronger than they are in present-day France. Significantly titled “The Petty Bourgeois,” this very documentary novel recounts how two couples, one fertile, the other infertile, make an agreement: the fertile woman produces a child with the infertile woman’s husband. The daughter resulting from that union is surrounded by equal affection from both couples, who live in the same building, and everyone around them knows the situation.

It is therefore the new reproductive technologies, made possible by the progress of biology, that have caused the recent confusion. In a realm essential to the maintenance of social order, our legal notions and our moral and philosophical beliefs prove to be incapable of finding ways to respond to new situations. How are we to define the relationship between biological kinship and social filiation? What will the moral and social consequences of the dissociation between reproduction and sexuality be? Does a child have the right to gain access to essential information concerning his sperm donor’s ethnic origin and general health? To what extent and within what limits can one violate the biological rules that the followers of most religious faiths continue to consider divinely instituted? On all these questions, anthropologists have a great deal to say, because these problems have arisen in the societies they study, and these societies offer solutions. Of course, they know nothing of the modern techniques for in vitro fertilization or for the removal, implantation, or freezing of eggs or embryos. But they have imagined and put into practice what are equivalent options, at least in legal and psychological terms. Allow me to give a few examples.

Insemination by donor sperm has its equivalent among the Samo of Burkina Faso, who have been studied by Françoise Héritier, my colleague and my successor at the Collège de France. In that society, every girl is married off very early; but before going to live with her husband, she must have a lover of her choice, officially acknowledged as such, for a period of at least three years. She brings her husband the first child produced by her lover’s good offices, and it will be considered the firstborn of the legitimate union. A man, for his part, can have several legitimate wives, but if they leave him, he will remain the legal father of all the children they bring into the world subsequently. In other African populations, the husband also has a right to all the children to come, provided that this right is reinstated after each birth by the first postpartum sexual relations. That act determines who will be the legal father of the next child. A married man whose wife is infertile can therefore, in exchange for payment, reach an understanding with a fertile woman, who will designate him as the father. In that case, the infertile woman’s legal husband is the biological father, and the other woman rents her womb to a man or a childless couple. The burning question in France, as to whether the surrogate mother must provide her services free of cost or whether she may receive remuneration, does not arise.

Among the Tupi-Kawahib Indians of Brazil, whom I visited in 1938, a man may marry, simultaneously or in succession, several sisters or a mother and her daughter from a previous union. These women raise their children in common, showing little concern, it seemed to me, whether the child for whom a woman is caring is her own or that of another of her husband’s wives. The reverse situation prevails in some parts of Tibet, where several husbands may share a single wife. All the children are attributed to the eldest, whom they call “father”; the other men they call “uncles.” In such cases, individual paternity and maternity are unknown or are not taken into account.

Let us return to Africa, where the Nuer of Sudan make an infertile woman the equivalent of a man. In her capacity as “paternal uncle,” she therefore receives the livestock representing the “bride wealth” paid for the marriage of her nieces, which she uses to purchase a wife, who will provide her with children thanks to the remunerated services of a man, often a stranger. Among the Yoruba of Nigeria as well, rich women can acquire wives, whom they impel to pair off with men. When the children are born, the woman, the legal “husband,” claims them, and the biological



An untitled painting by Francis Alÿs, whose work was on view in February at David Zwirner, in New York City.

parents must pay her handsomely in order to keep them. In all these cases, couples composed of two women practice assisted reproduction in order to have children; one of the women will be the legal father, the other the biological mother.

Societies without writing also have the equivalent of postmortem insemination, which is prohibited by the French courts. The levirate, an institution that has been employed for millennia (having already existed among the ancient Hebrews), allowed and sometimes obliged a brother to father a child in the name of his dead sibling. Among the Nuer, if a man died a bachelor or without descendants, a close male relation could take from the deceased's livestock the means to purchase a wife. That "ghost marriage," as the Nuer call it, allowed him to father children in the name of the deceased, who had provided the matrimonial compensation that creates filiation. In all the examples I have given, although the

child's familial and social status is determined as a function of the legal father (even if that father is a woman), the child nonetheless knows the identity of its biological father and is attached to him by bonds of affection. Despite our fears, transparency does not cause the child to feel any conflict about the fact that his or her biological father and social father are different individuals.

These societies also do not experience the sort of anxieties raised in our own by insemination with the frozen sperm of a deceased husband or even, theoretically, of a distant ancestor. For many of these peoples, a child is supposed to be the reincarnation of an ancestor, who chooses to live again in that descendant. And the "ghost marriage" of the Nuer allows for a further refinement in cases where the brother, as a substitute for the deceased, does not father children on his own behalf. The son fathered in the name of the deceased (and whom the biological father considers his nephew) will

be able to render the same service to his biological father. Since the biological father is the brother of his legal father, the children the son brings into the world will legally be his own cousins.

All these options provide metaphoric images that anticipate modern technologies. We therefore see that the conflict we find so troubling, between biological reproduction and social paternity, does not exist in the societies anthropologists study. These societies unhesitatingly give primacy to the social, and the two aspects do not clash in the ideology of the group or in the minds of individuals.

I have dwelled at length on these problems only because it seems to me that they show very well the kind of contribution contemporary society can hope for from anthropological research. The anthropologist does not propose that his contemporaries adopt the ideas and customs of one or another exotic population. Our contribution is much more modest. First, anthropology reveals that what we consider “natural,” founded on the order of things, actu-

ally amounts to constraints and mental habits specific to our own culture. Second, the facts we gather represent a very vast human experience, since they come from thousands of societies that have succeeded one another over the course of centuries, sometimes millennia, and that are distributed over the entire expanse of the inhabited earth. We therefore contribute toward drawing out what can be considered “universals” of human nature, and we are able to suggest within what frameworks as yet uncertain changes will come about, changes we would be wrong to denounce in advance as deviations or perversions.

The great debate currently unfolding on the subject of assisted reproduction is whether one ought to make laws about these matters, and if so, in what areas and in what direction. In several countries, representatives of public opinion, jurists, doctors, sociologists, and sometimes anthropologists sit on commissions and other organizations established by the government authorities. It is striking that anthropologists everywhere take the same tack: they oppose undue haste in making laws, in authorizing this and prohibiting that. In answer to overly impatient jurists and moralists, anthropologists advise liberality and caution. They point out that even the practices and aspirations that most shock public opinion—assisted reproduction in the service of single women, bachelors, widows, or homosexual couples—have their equivalents in other societies, which are none the worse for it. Anthropologists therefore wish to let things be. They want all individuals to submit to the internal logic of their own societies, in order to create familial and social structures that will prove viable, and to eliminate those that produce contradictions that only custom will prove to be insurmountable.

[Request]

INCOHERENCE ABROAD

From a letter to Mark Twain, postmarked October 1, 1879, from Carl Jensen, a customs officer in Stubbekøbing, Denmark. Twain's annotation reads, "Preserve this remarkable letter." Dear Mark Twain: Letters from His Readers, edited by R. Kent Rasmussen, is out this month from University of California Press.

To Mr. Samuel L. Clemens, alias Mark Twain:
Please to excuse that I fall with the door in the house, without first to begin with the usual long ribble-row. I want to become the autograph of the over alle the world well known Mark Twain, whose narratives so apt have procured me a laughter.

If you will answer this letter, I will be very glad. Answer me what you will; but two words. If you not will answer me other so write only, that you do not like to write autographs.

Your
Carl Jensen

[Evidence]

NEVER SAY NEUTER

From a January 22 report by New Mexico State Police officer Clinton Norris. Tanner Ruane and Mark Staake were arrested before they carried out their plan and are awaiting trial.

On November 20, 2012, I was assigned to investigate allegations of multiple counts of conspiracy to commit murder (also referred to as “murder for hire”). Former inmate Mark

Staake and his nephew, Tanner Ruane, had left Albuquerque on or around November 14, allegedly to locate, torture/mutilate, and murder two Vermont citizens: Maurice Simoneau Jr. and Pierre Legacy. There was some mention of plans to kidnap and murder teenage pop musical star Justin Bieber.

Current inmate Dana Martin, serving a life sentence for the 2000 murder of a fifteen-year-old female in Barre, Vermont, informed officers that he was responsible for causing Staake and Ruane to travel to Vermont to kill Simoneau and Legacy. I was able to listen to two recorded phone conversations between Martin and Ruane. The following is a summary.

Ruane told Martin that “we want to work for y’all, we want to make some big bucks.” Martin asked what they were going to use to kill Simoneau and Legacy, adding that he used a necktie on his victims. Martin asked if they had some ties with them, and Ruane stated that he had intended to buy some from the store. Martin then tried to ascertain how they planned to castrate the victims. Ruane stated that they had bought hedge clippers. Ruane further stated, “I told my homie [Staake], ‘Fool, I’m gonna do this. You’re gonna give me five large for each one I get.’” Martin laughed and repeated that Ruane was going to get “\$5,000 apiece for cutting off nuts,” continuing that it would average to about \$2,500 a testicle.

Martin then asked if they had some plastic bags to put the testicles in. Ruane stated that they did, and Martin said he was going to suggest that they hide the bags somewhere in the engine compartment. Martin then jokingly commented that the testicles “might have got cooked in there; you mighta had some . . . baked testicles.” After some laughter, Martin asked if Staake had informed Ruane about what kind of tie to use on the victims. Martin indicated that it had to be a tie with a paisley pattern. Ruane was ignorant about what a paisley pattern was and stated that Staake was supposed to be responsible for purchasing the tie. Martin then spoke concerning how to use the tie, stating, “You know, you tie it really, really tight.”

A conversation ensued that centered on Mr. Bieber. There was initial confusion on Ruane’s part about the connection between Martin and Bieber, but then it dawned upon Ruane that Martin was the one Staake said had a tattoo of Bieber “on accident.” Martin said that he had received the tattoo on purpose, stating he was “all caught up in the ‘Bieber Fever.’” Martin explained that Bieber was in a documentary entitled *Never Say Never*, which was released on February 11, 2011. To commemorate the movie release, Martin stated he had tattooed on his leg the same day the words JUSTIN BIEBER,

NEVER SAY NEVER, and FEBRUARY 11, 2011, along with a portrait of Justin Bieber. Later, when Bieber’s album *Believe* was released, Martin indicated that Bieber had BELIEVE tattooed on his (Bieber’s) arm, similar to the circumstances in which Martin received his tattoo. This similarity, in fact, made Martin angry. Martin stated, “I’m thinking to myself, ‘You know what, you little piece of shit [Bieber]? It was my idea first.’ So cut his balls off.” To which Ruane replied that he would do that.

[Journal]

SOUTHERN DISCOMFORT

From the unpublished diaries of LeRoy Wiley Gresham (1847–65), son of John J. Gresham, twice mayor of Macon, Georgia. LeRoy, a longtime invalid confined to his bed or to a mattress in a wagon drawn by slaves, wrote his final entry on June 9, 1865; he died nine days later. Bill, Allen, Florence, and Julia Anne are the given names of the Greshams’ slaves; Minnie is LeRoy’s sister. Selected pages of the diary are on display until June as part of The Civil War in America, an exhibition at the Library of Congress.

FEBRUARY 23, 1865

Cloudy. Rained a little between 8 and 9 A.M. Sherman is marching on Charlotte N.C. tearing up the R.R. and destroying everything. Father returned from Houston with 5 partridges, doves, and blackbirds, also “Bill” to pull me. Allen is “played out.” Aunt Ann sent me cake, pudding, syllabub, turkey, jellies, pickle etc.

FEBRUARY 27, 1865

Clear and beautiful day. The Militia have been furloughed indefinitely. It has been raining since half past 4. Nothing reliable from Sherman. I have been trying to clothe “Bill” in the garments of civilization today and have improved his appearance wonderfully.

APRIL 20, 1865

Clear and warm. Great excitement! The Yankees are on the outskirts and no resistance will be made. Gen. Johnston and Sherman have declared an armistice for the purpose of settling existing difficulties and great uneasiness exists for fear Lee is captured as Johnston made the truce. The city is full of Yankees; but everything is quiet now. They came with torches into the horselot and took Prince.

APRIL 24, 1865

Clear and cold. Sitting around the fire all day. Our present condition is the most anomalous ever heard of in the annals of war. Confeds and Feds walking the streets together and still Gen. Wilson claims every soldier in the city a prisoner. I saw Prince with a U.S. officer on him this morning.

APRIL 30, 1865

Clear and warm. Father and Minnie walked to church and on coming out found some Yanks had crossed two U.S. flags over the sidewalk coming up our way and were standing by awaiting the effect. Most of the ladies quietly, but indignantly, walked around. Dr. Hall called to see me this morning and examined my back and the abscesses. He is afraid to trouble them but is going to make me some tonic pills and see if he cannot relieve the indigestion and Dyspepsia from which I continually suffer.

MAY 3, 1865

Clear and cool. Took Paregoric last night and today have suffered tortures with my leg. I am perfectly helpless and have no appetite. There is one Yankee camp near Mrs. Mitchell's and another in the woods in Collinsville and we hear their bands and bugles playing constantly. As I write they are playing the "Star Spangled Banner."

MAY 12, 1865

Clear and cool. The wildest rumors are afloat concerning the whereabouts of President Davis and bands of cavalry are scouring the state to capture him. He is making for Texas.

MAY 22, 1865

Clear and very pleasant. Had a fine shower before breakfast. My bowels still trouble me and it does not seem to matter what I eat. I am taking Bismuth every three hours. I am in bed in the wing today. I change every day for variety. We get no news from the outside world but it is supposed all the negroes will be declared free in a day or two. Last night a Yankee sergeant harangued them at Church and told them of the priceless blessing of freedom which the federal authorities had given them.

MAY 29, 1865

Cloudy and cool. Julia Anne came and left, telling Mother Farewell. She announced her intention to leave because Mother slapped Florence. Joy go with her! She will repent of it to the day of her death. After every meal I suffer pain no matter how little I eat.

MAY 30, 1865

My "valet" Bill left this morning. I suppose Julia Anne induced him to go. Very unwell today and so will miss Bill the more.

JUNE 8, 1865

I have slept pretty well for the last two nights under the influence of a quarter grain of Morphia. Nothing definite from Bill as yet—doubtful whether I will ever see him again. I have read nothing at all for the last ten days and consequently know little of the outside world. My puppies Fosco and Guy have grown to double their former size so that I scarcely know them. I eat very little and even that nauseates me.

JUNE 9, 1865

I am perhaps—

[Fiction]

NOT INTERESTED

By Lydia Davis, published in the 2013 issue of NOON. Davis's "Five Stories from Flaubert" appeared in the November 2010 issue of Harper's Magazine.

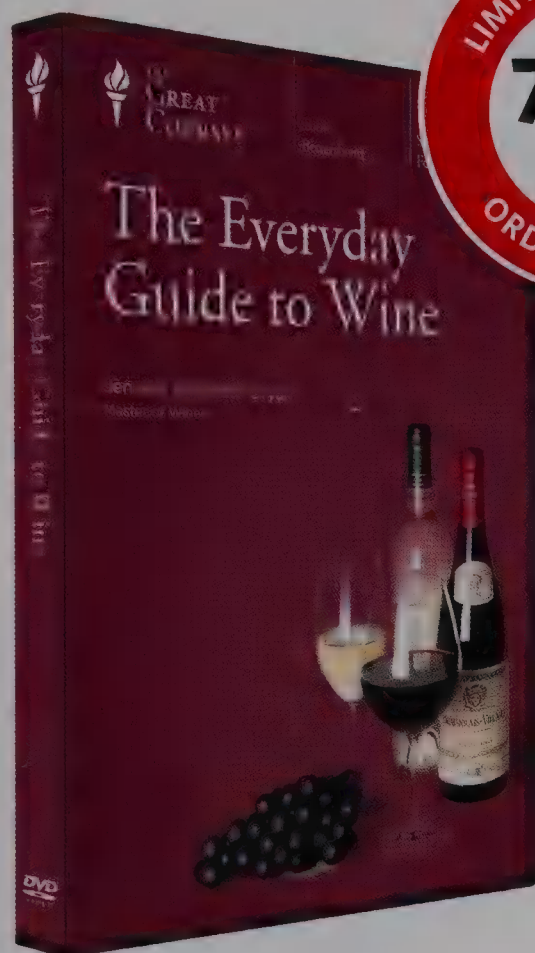
I'm simply not interested in reading this book. I was not interested in reading the last one I tried, either. I'm less and less interested in reading any of the books I have, though they are reasonably good, I suppose.

Just as, the other day, when I went out to the back yard, planning to gather up some sticks and branches and carry them to the pile in the far corner of the meadow, I suddenly became so deeply bored by the thought of picking up those sticks and carrying them, yet again, to that pile, and then coming back through the high meadow grass for more, that I did not even begin, and simply went inside.

Now I can do it again. It was only on that one day that I was bored. Then the feeling went away, and now I can go out again, pick up the sticks and branches, and take them to the pile. Actually, I pick up the sticks and carry them in my arms, and I drag the larger branches. I don't do both at once. I can make about three trips back and forth before I get tired and quit.

The books I'm talking about are supposed to be reasonably good, but they simply don't interest me. In fact, they may be a lot better than certain other books I have, but sometimes the books that aren't so good interest me more.

The day before that one particular day, and the day after it, I was willing to pick up sticks and take them back to the pile. Actually, for



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COURTESY THE ARTIST AND LARS MÜLLER PUBLISHERS, ZÜRICH

*"Stone Stilts, Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument," a photograph by Klaus Merkel, whose book *Trees Like Stones* was published by Lars Müller Publishers in January.*

many days before, and many days after. Could I even say: all the days before that day and all the days after? Don't ask me why I wasn't bored on other days. I've often wondered why, myself.

If I think about it, it may be that there is some satisfaction in seeing the haphazard pile of sticks and branches near the house get smaller each day, as I carry or drag them back. There is some interest, though not much, so little, in fact, that it is right on the edge of boredom, in looking at the meadow passing under my feet: the grasses, the wildflowers, and the occasional wild-animal scat. Then, when I reach the brush pile in the back, there is the best moment: I weigh the bundle of

sticks in my arms, or balance the branch in my two hands, and then heave them, or it, as far up to the top of the brush pile as I can. The walk back through the meadow is easy, compared to the walk out to the pile; I look around at the treetops and the sky, as well as at the house, though that never changes and is not interesting.

But on that particular day I did not even begin to feel interested in this chore, and was suddenly more deeply bored than I had ever been before, and just turned around and went back inside. Which made me wonder why I wanted to do this chore at all, on other days, and also which was real: my slight interest on other days,

or my profound boredom now. And it made me wonder if I really should be profoundly bored by this chore all the time and never do it again, and if there was something wrong with my mind that I was not bored by it all the time.

I'm not tired of all good books, I'm just tired of novels and stories, even good ones, or ones that are supposed to be good. These days, I prefer books that contain something real, or something the author at least believed to be real. I don't want to be bored by someone's imagination. Most people's imaginations just aren't very interesting—you can guess where the author got this idea and that idea. You can predict what will come next before you finish reading one sentence. It all seems so arbitrary.

But it's true that I'm also bored, sometimes, by my own dreams, and by the act of dreaming: Here I go again, this scene does not make sense, I must be falling asleep, this is a dream, I'm about to start dreaming again. And I am sometimes bored even by the act of thinking: Here's another thought, I'm about to find it interesting or not interesting—not this again! In fact, I am sometimes bored by my friendships: Oh, we will spend the evening together, we will talk, then I will go home—this again!

Actually, I don't mean I'm bored by old novels and books of stories, if they're good. Just new ones—good or bad. I feel like saying: Please spare me your imagination, I'm so tired of your vivid imagination, let someone else enjoy it. That's how I'm feeling these days, anyway. Maybe it will pass.

[Discovery]

LITTLE BANG THEORY

From In Search of a Concrete Music, by composer Pierre Schaeffer (1910–95), published last year for the first time in English by University of California Press. Published in French in 1952, the book collects Schaeffer's journals and other writings about his musique concrète, which he created by manipulating recorded sounds. Translated from the French by Christine North and John Dack.

FEBRUARY 1948

I can feel stirrings deep within me. Ideas are seeking outlets other than words: Ta ra ra boom—whistlings—the snow—gusts of perfect fullness of sound—no will to conclude. On the windswept plateau, right at the top of the ski tow, iron hooks turn around the wheel, having scraped the frozen snow away. The whirligig

of this mechanism injures the frost-crystal. Yet these things must, of necessity, be in harmony. A heterogeneous universe torments us. People today return to nature in bouts of ski tows, half-tracks, Kandahar ropes, superlight alloys. Thus, perfectly equipped, chrome-shod, asbestos-gloved, nylon-clad, they sample the immaculate mountain air. They are caught between two fires that burn and freeze them simultaneously. I must find a way to express this.

MARCH

I go to the sound-effects department of the French radio service. I find clappers, coconut shells, klaxons, bicycle horns. I imagine a scale of bicycle horns. There are gongs and birdcalls. It is charming that an administrative system should be concerned with birdcalls and should regularize their acquisition on an official form, duly recorded.

I take away doorbells, a set of bells, an alarm clock, two rattles, two childish painted whirligigs. The clerk causes some difficulties. Usually he is asked for a particular item. There are no sound effects without a text in parallel, are there? But what about the person who wants noise without text or context?

To tell the truth, I suspect that none of these objects will be of any use to me. They are too explicit. I take them with the joy of a child coming out of the loft with his arms full of embarrassing, albeit useless, things, and not without a powerful sense of my ridiculousness, guilt even.

APRIL 3

I need a metronome. The one that was sent to me does not beat in time, nor do the ones that followed. It is incredible how much a metronome can lack a sense of rhythm!

APRIL 4

Sudden illumination. Add a component of sound to noise—that is, combine a melodic element with the percussive element. From this, the notion of wood cut into different lengths, of approximately tuned tubes. First attempts.

APRIL 5

My bits of wood are pathetic. It's already bad enough trying to cut them to different lengths. Afterward, they have to be arranged so that they can be played easily. I'm up against the problem of the piano again.

APRIL 7

I go to Cavaillé-Coll and Pleyel. There I find parts of an organ destroyed in the bombing. I return with a truckload of "thirty-two-footers" and tongued reeds. My originality will be not

to play them like an organist but to hit them with a mallet, detune them perhaps. The war had already taken this on.

APRIL 12

I need some helpers for my increasingly laborious trials. One of them blows into the two largest pipes, which are pleasantly only a “small tone” apart. (We laugh a lot at this expression, small tone or large semitone—as you please.) The second helper, armed with two mallets, covers with great difficulty an octave of xylophonic recumbent effigies. A third is in charge of the little bells. We rehearse, make mistakes, begin again, record. The result is woeful.

APRIL 15

I am trying to construct an automatically vibrating metal strip (like a doorbell) that I can bring into contact with various sound bodies. In this way I get a mode of attack from these bodies, which superimposes the noise and rhythm of the attack on the sound. The results are profoundly monotonous. Furthermore, all these noises are identifiable. As soon as you hear them, they suggest glass, a bell, wood, a gong, iron ... I'm giving up on music.

APRIL 19

By having one of the bells hit I got the sound *after* the attack. Without its percussion the bell becomes an oboe sound. I prick up my ears. Has a breach appeared in the enemy ranks? Has the advantage changed sides?

APRIL 21

If I cut off the sounds from their attacks, I get a different sound; on the other hand, if I compensate for the drop in intensity with the potentiometer, I get a drawn-out sound and can move the continuation at will. So I record a series of notes made in this way, each one on a disc. By arranging the discs on record players, I can, using the controls, play these notes as I wish, one after the other or simultaneously. Of course, the manipulation is unwieldy, unsuited to any virtuosity; but I have a musical instrument. A new instrument? I am doubtful.

APRIL 22

Once my initial joy is past, I ponder. I've already got quite a lot of problems with my turntables because there is only one note per turntable. With a cinematographic flash-forward, Hollywood-style, I see myself surrounded by twelve dozen turntables, each with one note. It would be, as mathematicians would say, *the most general musical instrument possible*. Is this another blind alley, or am I in possession of a solution whose importance I can only guess at?

[Fiction]

LIMHAMNSFÄLTET

By Karl Ove Knausgaard, from *My Struggle*, Book Two: *A Man in Love*, the second volume of his six-volume autobiographical novel, to be published next month by Archipelago Books. Translated from the Norwegian by Don Bartlett.

The idea was to get as close as possible to my life, so I wrote about Linda and John sleeping in the adjacent room, Vanja and Heidi, who were at the nursery, the view from the window and the music I was listening to. The next day I went to the rented cabin, I wrote more there, some ultramodernistic-style passages about faces and the patterns that exist in all big systems, sand heaps, clouds, economies, traffic, occasionally went into the garden to smoke and watch the birds flying hither and thither in the sky, it was February and there was no one around in the enormous allotment compound, just row upon row of small, well-kept doll's houses in small gardens, so perfect they looked like living rooms. In the evening a huge flock of crows flew over, there must have been several hundred, a dark cloud of flapping wings drifting past and flying on. Night fell, and apart from what was lit up by the light streaming out the open door at the other end of the garden, everything around me was dark. So still was I, where I sat, that a hedgehog shuffled by, half a meter from my feet.

“Well, hello there,” I said, and waited until it had reached the hedge before getting up and going in. The next day I began to write about the spring Dad moved out from Mom and me, and even though I hated every sentence I decided to persist, I had to come to terms with it, to tell the story I had tried for so long to tell. Back at home, I continued with some notes I made when I was eighteen and for some reason had not disposed of, “bags of beer in the ditch” caught my eye, a reference to one New Year's Eve when I was a teenager, I could use that, so long as I wasn't too bothered and shelved any idea of aiming for the sublime. The weeks passed, I wrote, walked the children to the nursery or collected them, spent the afternoons with them in one of the many parks, cooked dinner, read to them and put them to bed, worked on reader reports and other odd jobs in the evenings. Every Sunday I cycled to Limhamnsfältet and played football for two hours, that was my only leisure activity, everything else was either work or children.

Limhamnsfältet was an enormous grassy area outside the town, by the sea. Since the end of the 1960s a motley collection of men have gathered there every Sunday at a quarter past ten. The youngest are sixteen or seventeen while the oldest, Kai, is closer to eighty—he is on the wing and the ball has to be played to his feet, but if he gets it, there is still enough football left in him to whip in a center, and now and then he even scores a goal. But the majority of the players are between thirty and forty, come from all walks of life and all they really have in common is the joy of playing football. The last Sunday in February Linda and the children came along, Vanja and Heidi cheered me on for a bit, then they went to the play area by the beach while I carried on playing. There had been a ground frost, the usually soft layer of grass was rock-hard, and when after half an hour I was sent flying by a tackle and landed smack on my shoulder I realized at once that something was wrong. I stayed down, the others gathered around, I was nauseated with the pain, hobbled slowly with my shoulder hunched behind the goal, the others knew that this wasn't just a little knock and the game was called off, it was half past eleven anyway.

Fredrik, a fifty-something writer and classic poacher who still bangs in goals in Swedish nonleague football, drove me to the hospital while Martin, a two-meter-plus giant of a Dane I knew through the nursery, undertook to inform Linda and the children about what had happened. The emergency room was full, I took a number from the machine and sat down to wait, my shoulder burned and there was a stab of pain every time I moved it, but it was bearable for the half hour it would take before it was my turn. I explained the situation to the nurse in reception, who came out to give me a quick examination, grabbed my arm and moved it slowly to the side. I screamed at the top of my lungs. AAAAAAgggghhh! Everyone stared at me, a man approaching forty, wearing an Argentina national shirt and football shoes, his long hair tied in a knot like a pineapple with an elastic band on top of his head, howling with pain.

"You'd better come with me," the nurse said. "So we can have you examined properly."

I went into a room nearby, where she asked me to wait, a few minutes later another nurse came, she made the same movement with my arm, I screamed again.

"Sorry," I said. "But I can't help it."

"No problem," she said, gently removing my tracksuit top. "We'll have to take your shirt off as well," she said. "Do you think that'll be okay?"

She pulled at the sleeve, I screamed, she

[Résumé]

VISIBLE CITIES

From Italo Calvino: Letters 1941–1985, out this month from Princeton University Press. Franco Maria Ricci, a publisher, commissioned Calvino to prepare a text for a volume containing reproductions of the fifteenth-century Visconti tarot decks; the text later became the novel The Castle of Crossed Destinies (1973). This letter is thought to have been written in Paris in the autumn of 1969. Translated from the Italian by Martin McLaughlin.

Dear Mr. Ricci,

Here is my CV. I was born in 1923 under a sky in which the radiant Sun and melancholy Saturn were housed in harmonious Libra. I spent the first twenty-five years of my life in what was in those days a still verdant San Remo, which contained cosmopolitan eccentrics amid the surly isolation of its rural, practical folk; I was marked for life by both these aspects of the place. Then I moved to industrious and rational Turin, where the risk of going mad is no less than elsewhere (as Nietzsche found out). I arrived at a time when the streets opened out deserted and endless, so few were the cars; to shorten my journeys on foot I would cross the rectilinear streets on long obliques from one angle to the other—a procedure that today is not just impossible but unthinkable—and in this way I would advance marking out invisible hypotenuses between gray right-angled sides. I got to know only barely other famous metropolises, on the Atlantic and Pacific, falling in love with all of them at first sight: I deluded myself into believing that I had understood and possessed some of them, while others remained forever ungraspable and foreign to me. For many years I suffered from a geographic neurosis: I was unable to stay three consecutive days in one city or place. In the end I chose definitive wife and dwelling in Paris, a city that is surrounded by forests and hornbeams and birches, where I walk with my daughter Abigail, and that in turn surrounds the Bibliothèque Nationale, where I go to consult rare books, using my Reader's Ticket no. 2516. In this way, prepared for the Worst, and becoming more and more dissatisfied with the Best, I am already anticipating the incomparable joys of growing old. That's all.

Yours sincerely,
Calvino



"Peter, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia," a photograph by Charlotte Dumas, from the series Anima, which depicts the cemetery's burial horses falling asleep at night. The work was on view last month at Julie Saul Gallery, in New York City.

paused, tried again. Took a step back. Looked at me. I felt like an oversize child.

"We'll have to cut it off."

Now it was my turn to look at her. Cut up my Argentina shirt?

She came back with some scissors and cut up the sleeves, then asked me to sit on a bed once the shirt was off and stuck a needle in my lower arm, just above the wrist. She was going to give me a bit of morphine, she said. After it was done, although I noticed nothing, she rolled me into another room, perhaps fifty meters deeper into the labyrinthine building, where I was left alone to wait for an X-ray, not without some dread because I thought my shoulder must have been dislocated and, if so, I knew putting it back would be painful. But it was a fracture, the doctor confirmed. It would take between eight and twelve weeks to heal. They gave me some painkillers, a prescription for more, tied a bandage in a taut figure eight over and under the shoulders,

hung my tracksuit top on me, and sent me home.

When I opened the door to the flat Vanja and Heidi came toward me at a run. They were excited, Daddy had been to the hospital, it was an adventure. I told them and Linda, who followed with John on her arm, that I had broken my collarbone and had a sling, it was nothing major, but I couldn't lift or carry or use my arm for the next two months.

"Are you serious?" Linda asked. "Two months?"

"Three at worst," I said.

"You must never play football again, that's for sure," Linda said.

"Oh?" I said. "So that's your decision, is it?"

"It's me who has to put up with the consequences," she said. "How am I going to take care of the children on my own for two months, if I might ask?"

"It'll be fine," I said. "Relax. I've broken my collarbone, after all. It hurts, and it's not as if I did it on purpose."

I went into the living room to sit down on the sofa. I had to make every movement slowly and plan it in advance. Every little deviation sent a pain through me. Agh, *ohh*, *oooh*, I said, slowly lowering myself. Vanja and Heidi watched with saucer eyes.

I smiled at them while trying to put the big cushion behind my back. They came up close. Heidi ran her hand across my chest as if to examine it.

"Can we have a look at the bandage?" Vanja asked.

"Afterward," I said. "It hurts a little to take clothes off and put them back on, you see."

"Food's up!" Linda shouted from the kitchen.

John was sitting in his baby chair banging his knife and fork on the table. Vanja and Heidi stared at me and my slow, laborious movements as I sat down.

"What a day!" Linda said. "Martin didn't know a thing, only that you'd been taken to the emergency room. He brought us home, luckily, but when I was opening the door the key broke. Oh my God. I visualized us having to stay with them tonight. But then I double-checked my bag, and there it was, Berit's key. What a stroke of luck! I hadn't hung it up. And then you come home with a broken collarbone ..."

She looked at me.

"I'm so tired," she said.

"I'm sorry," I said. "It'll probably only be the first few days that I can't do anything. And then one arm will be perfectly okay."

After eating I lay down on the sofa with a cushion behind my back watching an Italian football match on TV. In the four years we'd had children I had only done something like this once. At the time I was so ill I couldn't move, I lay on the sofa for a whole day, saw ten minutes of the first Jason Bourne film, slept for a bit, saw ten minutes, slept for a bit, threw up intermittently, and even though my whole body ached and basically it was absolutely unbearable, I still enjoyed every second. Lying on the sofa and watching a film in the middle of the day! Not one single obligation! No clothes to be washed, no floor to be scrubbed, no dishes to be done, no children to look after.

Now I had that same feeling. I was not in a position to do anything. However much my shoulder burned and stung and ached, the pleasure at being able to lie in total peace was greater.

Vanja and Heidi circled around me, coming close every so often and gently stroking my shoulder, then they went out of the room to play, and came back. For them this was probably unprecedented, I mused, my being completely passive and still. It was as though they had discovered a new side of me.

When the match was over I went for a bath. We didn't have a cradle for the showerhead, we had to hold it in one hand, and that option was out of the question now, so all I could do was run the bath and climb into the tub with difficulty. Vanja and Heidi watched me.

"Do you need any help with washing, Daddy?" Vanja asked. "Can we wash you?"

"Yes, that would be nice," I said. "Can you see the cloths there? Take one each, and then dip it in the water and rub some soap into it."

Vanja followed the instructions precisely, Heidi copied her. And they stood there, leaning over the edge of the bath and washing me with their cloths. Heidi laughed, Vanja was serious and businesslike. They washed my arms, neck, and chest. Heidi was bored after a few seconds and ran into the living room, while Vanja stayed for a while longer.

"Is that good?" she asked at length.

I smiled. That was what I usually asked.

"Yes, it's great," I said. "I don't know what I'd do without you!"

She brightened up, and then she ran into the living room as well.

I wallowed in the water until it turned cold. First football on TV, then a long bath. What a Sunday!

Vanja came in a couple of times to see. I supposed she was waiting for the bandage to be put on. She spoke Swedish, of course, still with Stockholm intonation, but when I had been with her for a morning or an afternoon, or she felt close to me for some other reason, words from my dialect appeared more frequently in her conversation. Very often she would say *mæ* instead of the Swedish *mig*, me. "*Lyft upp mæ!*" Lift me up, she would say, for example. I laughed every time.

"Can you go and get Mommy?" I said.

She nodded and ran off. I got out of the bath gingerly, and had dried myself by the time she came back.

"Could you put the bandage on?" I asked.

"No problem," she said.

I explained how it was supposed to be, and said she had to pull it hard, otherwise it wasn't doing its job.

"Harder!"

"Doesn't it hurt?"

"A bit, but the tauter it is the less it hurts when I move."

"Okay," she said. "If you say so."

And then she pulled from behind.

"Aaaaagh!" I said.

"Was that too hard?"

"No, that was good," I said. I turned toward her.

"I'm sorry I was so grumpy," she said. "But I had such a terrible vision of the future, me doing everything on my own for months on end."

"It won't be like that though," I said. "I'll be able to take them to school and pick them up as usual within a few days, I'm sure."

"I know it hurts, and it's not your fault. But I'm just so tired."

"I know. It'll be fine. Things'll sort themselves out."

On Friday Linda was so tired that I went with John to pick the girls up from the nursery. Going there was easy, I pushed John in the stroller with my right hand while walking behind as carefully as I could. The way back was more problematic. I pulled John after me with my right hand, clutching the injured left hand to my side and somehow shunting Vanja and Heidi in the double carriage with my whole body. Occasional pains shot through me and I had no defense except to emit little screams. It must have been a bizarre sight, and people did stare at us as we trundled along. It was also a strange experience for me during those weeks.

[Translation]

UNTITLED POEM

By Hafiz (c. 1320–89), published in the November/December 2012 issue of The American Poetry Review. Translated by Matthew Rohrer, who consulted earlier English versions rather than the Persian.

All I want to do
is get drunk with my wife

An endless glass of wine
both of us on the floor

So what if squares
look down on us?

Boring and misguided
are their miserable lives

When my wife is in the city
and I'm home
I want to cry

The moonlight
on the cypress tree
is a bitter light

No book has ever kissed me
like she does

Not being able to lift or carry, and finding it difficult to sit down and get up, gave me a sense of helplessness that went beyond physical restrictions. Suddenly I had no authority, no strength, and the feeling of control I had taken for granted until now became manifest. I sat still, I was passive, and it was as though I had lost control of my surroundings. So, had I always felt I controlled them and had power over them? Yes, I must have. I hadn't needed to make any use of the power and the control, it had been enough to know that it existed, it permeated everything I did and everything I thought. Now it was gone, and I saw it for the first time. Even stranger was the fact that the same applied to writing. Also with it I had a sense of power and control, which disappeared with the broken collarbone. Suddenly I was *under* the text, suddenly it had power over me, and it was only with the greatest effort of will that I managed to write the five pages a day I had set myself as a goal. But I managed, I managed that too. I hated every syllable, every word, every sentence, but not liking what I was doing didn't mean I shouldn't do it. One year and it would be over, and then I would be able to write about something else. The pages mounted, the story advanced and then one day I came to another of the places where I had made a note in the book I had kept for the past twenty years, about a party Dad had held for friends and colleagues the summer I turned sixteen, a gathering that in the late-autumn darkness merged into one with my own enormous pleasure and Dad crying, it was so emotional, such an impossible evening, everything converged there and now at last I was going to write about it. Once it was done, the rest would be about Dad's death. This was a heavy door to open, it was hard being inside, but I approached it in the new way: five pages every day, regardless. Then I got up, switched off the computer, took the trash with me, disposed of it in the basement and went to collect the children. The horror lodged in my chest dissipated when they came running toward me across the playground. They competed with each other, seeing who could shout loudest and give me the biggest hug. If John was with us he sat smiling and shouting, for him his two sisters were the tops. They scattered their lives around him, he sat lapping it all up, and copied whatever he could, and even Heidi, who could still become so jealous of him that she would scratch or knock or thump him if we didn't keep an eagle eye open, didn't hold any fears for him, he never viewed her with fear. Did he forget? Or was there so much goodness there the rest was lost in it?



"Helicopter Take-Off at Night," a gelatin silver print by Andreas Feininger, whose work was on view in December as part of Photography, Sequence, & Time, at the New Orleans Museum of Art.

THE AWAKENING

Ron Paul's generational movement

By Michael Ames



Almost half a year later, the post-mortems continue. After an election in which Republicans failed to capture the White House and lost several seemingly winnable Senate seats, in which their tenuous majority in the House

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was retained more by way of redistricting than by the will of the voting public, everyone within and without the G.O.P. agrees it has a big problem.

Some insist that the critical failure of 2012 was one of messaging, that the party will return to power not by changing its beliefs but by finding the right tone—and the right candidate—

to articulate its current ones. “The Republican Party does not need to change our principles,” Louisiana governor Bobby Jindal—already positioning himself to be that candidate—told a meeting of the Republican National Committee in Charlotte, North Carolina, in January. “But we might need to change just about everything else we

do.” Lest it seem he was taking the problem too lightly, Jindal continued: “We must stop being the stupid party. It’s time for a new Republican party that talks like adults.”

Others say the hour for superficial tinkering is past. If politics is a lagging indicator, Republicans may simply have fallen behind market trends. By this thinking, demographic and social changes spell doom for the party as it is currently configured. As South Carolina senator Lindsey Graham told the *Washington Post* last year, “We’re not generating enough angry white guys to stay in business for the long term.”

Political coalitions are fragile things. It’s been four decades since Nixon united fiscal and social conservatives into the potent white alliance that won four of five presidential elections between 1972 and 1988, including two forty-nine-state landslides. Since then, the party has lost four of six presidential elections, as well as the popular vote in one of the two it won.

Graham’s comment reflects a growing worry not just that the party needs to compromise, even on “core values,” but that the coalition itself can no longer overcome its inherent contradictions. In the face of this existential crisis, party leaders seem oddly indifferent to—or ignorant of—the fact that a base of excited, young, and organized conservatives already exists. They are the Ron Paul youth.

It may seem strange to suggest that a seventy-seven-year-old man, retired this year from his perch in Congress, where he had served for most of the past thirty-seven years, might represent the future of anything. But the critical thing to understand about Ron Paul is that his campaign will never end. Since leaving Washington in January, he has committed even more time and attention to returning the Republican Party to its humble, small-government roots.

For the wider public, Ron Paul remains the eccentric old man at the far end of the primary-debate stage, rambling about the Federal Reserve, the balance of power, and the dangers of an expanding American empire. Before that, Paul spent decades in Congress casting lonely votes against seemingly innocuous bills—nay to honoring Mother Teresa with a con-

gressional medal, nay to federal flood insurance for his district on the Texas coastline, nay to a resolution marking the fortieth anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. His detractors nicknamed Paul, an obstetrician by training, “Dr. No.” You could find him late at night on C-SPAN, pining like Rip Van Winkle on the empty House floor for the quill-and-parchment policies of an American age long since gone. Silver coins. Legalized hemp. No federal taxation. All this along with an insular, do-unto-others foreign policy that hasn’t been relevant since the U.S. Navy landed at Quallah Battoo.

Nevertheless, the Ron Paul Revolution, as his campaign has been called, was fueled by a young, antiwar base when he first ran for president as a Republican, in 2007. That was the year the first guerrilla *REVOLUTION* signs went up along highways, the year an online “money bomb” raised a record \$6 million in small donations in one day and supporters launched a 200-foot blimp that encouraged confused onlookers to *GOOGLE RON PAUL*. It was the right’s first serious youth movement since Goldwater. In early 2009, Hillary Clinton, newly confirmed as secretary of state, went off script at a congressional hearing to remark on the phenomenon. “I mean, my goodness,” she said to Paul, “everywhere I went, they were literally running down highways holding your signs.”

Paul’s ardent young apostles can be righteous, but their code is our eternal American lore. To them, Ron Paul is John Quincy Adams warning that America ought not go “abroad in search of monsters to destroy.” He is Henry David Thoreau insisting that “that government is best which governs least” and Woody Guthrie announcing his suspicion that folks “been robbing each other . . . with fountain pens.”

“It’s like really waking up.” That’s how Ashley Ryan describes the day she found Ron Paul. She first heard him speak five years ago, when she was sixteen, and has since spent countless hours as an activist not for Ron Paul the man, she says, but for his beliefs. The speech that drew her in was one of Paul’s staples, a folksy homily on the evils of the modern war-making corporate nation-state, but it sparked

moral outrage. The petite, mild-mannered Maine teenager was electrified, and she took up Ron Paul’s mission. “Once you wake up,” she told me, “you can’t go back to sleep.”

I met Ryan last August in Tampa, where she was sworn in at the Republican National Convention as Maine’s committeewoman, possibly the youngest person from any state ever to hold the title. Ryan had spent the previous weekend at the PAUL (People Awakening and Uniting for Liberty) Festival, the grassroots libertarian shadow convention that served as the Paulite operating base in Tampa. (Having refused to endorse Romney, Paul was denied a speaking slot at the real thing.) Ryan told me about being “bitten by the liberty bug” and said that she was taking off her fall semester at college to concentrate on her political activities. When she talked about nonpolitical topics, such as the painted beads she wears in her tongue (“I take them out when I go to Republican things”), she seemed like an average upbeat young woman. But when she talked about Liberty, her voice dropped and gathered like a fist.

The day before she took on her establishment role, Ryan gave the biggest speech of her life, to a crowd of 10,000 fellow subversives. As the outer bands of Tropical Storm Isaac lashed the palm trees on the University of South Florida campus, the Paul campaign filled the Sun Dome for a six-hour extravagance they called the We Are the Future Rally. To many on the outside, it looked like a preening swan song for Paul, who would be leaving Congress at the end of the year. But inside, the retirement party escalated into a declaration of intraparty war. The dark arena flashed with strobes and boomed with chants of “President Paul!” When her turn came, Ashley Ryan had the screaming crowd on its feet before she had uttered a single word. As rally emcee and senior Paul campaign adviser Doug Wead put it when he introduced her, “[RNC rules-committee chair] John Sununu is here today, but he’ll be gone tomorrow.

And this young lady, she will still be here.”

At “Paul Fest,” the truly devout had *REVOLUTION* tattooed on their forearms and talked about their conversion experiences as if they were George

Harrison at Rishikesh. Some had piled into cross-country “Ronvoys” that rolled to Tampa from Tucson and beyond. A young man from Nevada told me that Ron Paul had taught him to see everything differently. I nodded and jotted this down in my notebook. “No,” he said, his eyes locking on mine. “Everything.” A ponytailed and bearded man calling himself Donny Tsunami told me that finding “the teachings of Dr. Paul” is like “opening a door that reveals countless more doors.” The festival was billed as three days of “liberty unleashed,” and over the course of the weekend I heard several people ask each other, “How long have you been awake?”

The Ron Paul awakening is sort of like finding your religion and sort of like becoming aware of the Matrix. One minute, you’re an average kid walking down the street in Anytown, USA. The next, you’re sucked through a wormhole in the sidewalk and emerge in an alternate reality of social engineering through currency manipulation. “We took the red pill,” Amanda White told me. “Most sheep don’t even know there’s a pill to take.” She was standing in a circle of activists exchanging stories from the trail. She wore suede slippers, mismatched socks (one safety orange, one raspberry-slushie blue), and a white T-shirt that she’d spray-stenciled to read, in Day-Glo, RON PAUL 2012 and 1776 vs. 1984.

Like a lot of activists I met, White was in Tampa on her own. She buzzed around Paul Fest recording video with her iPhone, and every time I intercepted her, she dropped a new dose of secret history on me. “Did you know,” she said, “that the Gun Control Act of 1968 was written with language that was lifted straight from the gun-control laws in Nazi Germany?” When I reacted with surprise, she arched her eyebrows and cracked a wry smile that bespoke troves of dark knowledge. “Dude. You didn’t know this? Look it up! I got it from Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership.”

Paulites traffic in Internet folklore. I was invited into several spontaneous huddles that tightened around a smartphone’s glow. One of the best videos I was shown was of MSNBC host and former Republican congressman Joe Scarborough reading a Nostradamian statement that Paul made in 2003

about the housing-market crash of 2008. When the clip ended, we all looked at one another with round-eyed astonishment. A young man standing next to me made a sudden confession: Back home, he said gravely, his parents and brothers “still haven’t woken up yet.”

Paul’s 2012 presidential campaign was better organized and funded than his 2008 attempt. (Among Republicans, only Mitt Romney raised more money last year.) Paul didn’t win a single state primary, but, unlike his rivals, he kept his polling numbers steady, and his campaign worked methodically to take over the party from within. While Newt Gingrich was out spending money he didn’t have for votes he wouldn’t get, Ron Paul continued laying the foundation for a generational movement. Today, Republicans affiliated with his so-called Liberty Movement control the state parties in Iowa, Maine, Michigan, and Nevada and are ascendant in more than a dozen other states.

These gains came amid a sustained media blackout. In mid-January, just as Paul began to rise in the polls and vie with Gingrich and Rick Santorum as Romney’s main challenger, coverage of his campaign in the press disappeared. That month, the public editor of the *New York Times* wrote that early in the campaign the paper had “decided to remain low key in its coverage of Ron Paul.” In response to the brazen and widespread treatment, Jon Stewart asked on *The Daily Show*, “How did libertarian Ron Paul become the thirteenth floor in a hotel?” But it wasn’t a new phenomenon; the pattern dated from 2008, says Doug Wead, when MSNBC’s Chris Matthews personally apologized to Paul for not calling on him when he signaled to speak in a presidential debate Matthews had moderated. According to Wead, Matthews said, “The voice in my earplug said, ‘Don’t go to Ron Paul. Don’t go to Ron Paul.’”

Paul’s followers are millennials raised on *The Daily Show* and wary of partisan bullshit. They are far more concerned about bankrolling the baby-boomer pension plan than about whether their lesbian neighbors are allowed to get married. They represent this country’s only concentration of young conservative enthusiasm and,

paradoxically, the only remaining organized political resistance to what we used to call the System.¹ The Paulites are the bridge that connects the two great camps of populist discontent—Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party. Moderate libertarian independents are the largest untapped market in American politics, one that grows larger every year. The G.O.P. establishment has no clue how to reach them and, inexplicably, shows no intention of even trying.

At Paul Fest’s opening night, where punk-metal bands raged to almost no one in the Florida State Fairgrounds’ cavernous arena, I went looking for a familiar face. I found Amanda White in the parking lot talking to Dru Schottenheimer, the founder of LetRonPaulSpeak.com, a website set up to collect signatures for an online petition demanding that the congressman be allowed to address the Republican convention. We were all tired and fading, and I offered to drive everyone to a nearby gas station for Cool Ranch Doritos and a six-pack of Yuengling that would stay cold for about ten minutes in the swampy Tampa night. On the ride over, Schottenheimer told us that he is a Christian conservative, that gay marriage is wrong, and that abortion is murder. White nodded emphatically and said, “That’s cool, dude. Liberty entitles everyone to live according to his beliefs.” As he stepped out of the car, Schottenheimer shook his head and grimaced. He took off his hat and rubbed his face and looked through the greasy convenience-store windows at the racks of Hostess cakes, the menthol cigarettes and instant-lotto tickets and porno mags. These things “are wrong,” he said, “and they are moral issues. But I don’t believe the government can tell people what to do.”

Ron Paul insists that he is the only true small-government conservative on the national stage. But listening to Schottenheimer and White, I had the disorienting thought that the man Jon Stewart once diagnosed as “Tea Party

¹ They are also active military. During the 2012 primaries, members of the armed forces donated almost twice as much money to Ron Paul as they did to President Obama, and more than seven times what they gave Mitt Romney.



patient zero” might also be the only compelling liberal among recent presidential candidates, or at least the only one who seems genuinely interested in pushing certain causes that progressives hold dear.

President Obama claims that his administration reformed the financial industry, yet his Wall Street fund-raising suggests that the banks know well they have nothing to fear from him. Five years after “Too big to fail,” the biggest banks are all larger than before. Yesterday’s moral hazards have become tomorrow’s federal guarantees. Long before Occupy and the Tea Party understood Wall Street as both slave and master of the Federal Reserve, Ron Paul obsessed over their scandalous arrangement. He echoed the suspicions of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, who predicted that the central bank would become the driver of income inequality. Whereas the right distracts voters with urgent noises about Marxist income redistribution, Paul insists the real problem is money flowing in the opposite direction. His Liberty Movement may never “end the Fed,” but its members

show more concern than anyone on the left (outside Vermont senator Bernie Sanders) about the Fed’s practice of “socialism for the rich.”

Since receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, Obama has ordered more than 300 drone strikes in Pakistan alone that have killed roughly 3,000 people, including more than 500 civilians, both adults and children. As a candidate, Obama campaigned against what he called the “dumb war” in Iraq, but once in office he stuck to the Bush-era timelines for withdrawal and rubber-stamped plans for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, which, at 104 acres, is about the size of Vatican City and is the largest embassy in the world. With the notable exception of torture, President Obama has upheld the raft of expanded military, police, and surveillance powers that the Bush Administration arrogated to itself in the years following 9/11. Guantánamo won’t close down until all the prisoners there are dead. Obama has gone beyond even Bush in his willingness to target U.S. citizens for extrajudicial execution.

Paul’s foreign policy has been a radi-

cal departure not just from mainstream Republicanism but from the views of the entire political establishment. “For heaven’s sake,” he asks, “what kind of debate is it in which all sides agree that America needs troops in 130 countries?” He opposes drones foreign and domestic. He questions every aspect of the security state. “If the president claims extraordinary wartime powers, and we fight undeclared wars with no beginning and no end,” he wrote while Bush was still in office, “when if ever will those extraordinary powers lapse?” In a September 2001 speech on the House floor, just two weeks after 9/11, he said that “we should not casually ignore the root causes of our current fight” and declared American foreign policy as partly to blame. Terrorism, he would later say to stony silence at many a G.O.P. primary debate, grows in proportion to American empire. “They don’t come here to attack us because we’re rich and we’re free,” he told Rudy Giuliani in South Carolina. “They attack us because we’re over there.” Paul’s unwavering isolationism has riled Republicans and stirred leftist passions

since he was a fringe figure in the 1980s. Before last year's Iowa caucuses, the peace activist and whistle-blowing FBI agent Coleen Rowley endorsed Paul in an op-ed in the *Des Moines Register* and urged liberals to embrace the man she deemed the only antiwar candidate in either party.²

Of course, liberals don't get to vote for Ron Paul and then smash just the parts of the state they don't like. He won't stop at the Pentagon. Warfare and welfare are "but one idea," Paul writes, the embryonic cells of tyranny, and each requires the same total authority. The power that forces a man into military service is no different from the one that takes his money. All the mechanisms and institutions of regulation and social welfare are slated for drastic downsizing or outright removal. Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Internal Revenue Service. There will be no gun control. The forced redistribution of money from the young, healthy, and working to the elderly, sick, and poor will come to an end. To Paul's core supporters, who see a system riddled with hypocrisy and corruption, the bitterness of this pill proves its purity.

They are members of a particular kind of cult; at Paul Fest, the trappings of messianic idol worship could be found everywhere. An all-blond gang of vaguely evangelical young men roamed the grounds in TYRANNY RESPONSE TEAM T-shirts. Dozens of vendors hawked totems and charms. Little Ron Paul bobblehead dolls clutched tiny Constitutions. You could buy a case of Ron Paul Milk Chocolate Standard bars ("Liberty Just Got Sweeter") and tickets to the 2013 Ron Paul Cruise. The overall mood was one of patriotic passion and righteous anger heightened by survivalist paranoia. The John Birch Society gave away free pens next to a booth showing the trailer for *Gray State*, an as yet undeveloped movie in which a fourth round of quantitative

easing by the Fed leads to FEMA-enforced martial law, concentration camps, and beheadings by guillotine. "*Gray State*," the posters advised, "is not necessarily fiction."

Hard-core libertarians live in a world that does not distinguish between metaphor and reality, between the possible and the actual. After all, when Friedrich Hayek wrote about the "road to serfdom," it wasn't a figure of speech—he believed that even the most seemingly benign bit of central planning led inexorably to the gulag. Such a mind-set makes fertile ground for fantastical conspiracy theories. Some anarchist notions—like the worry that America's police forces are being gradually militarized—are grounded in facts that go underreported. Some are baseless paranoia. Then there's the case of Brandon Raub, the outspoken former Marine who was taken into involuntary FBI custody after he posted inflammatory content on his Facebook page, including violent song lyrics and theories about the U.S. government having orchestrated the attacks of 9/11. Though Raub was never charged with a crime, he spent a week in custody before a judge ordered his release.

For someone like Amanda White, Raub's case is both frightening and reaffirming: If you spend your days crowing in the public commons about chemtrails and FEMA death camps and how the government is going to come get you—well, it turns out that thanks to the antiterrorism laws you protest against so tirelessly, the government might actually come to get you.

White told me about Raub as we walked under an oppressive sun to the Paul Fest camping area, an empty lot of scrubby Bermuda grass and muddy tire ruts behind the arena. Our route was marked by chicken-wire fences that encircled the fairgrounds' other weekend tenant: the Republican National Convention's \$50 million federal security detail, which had established its base camp here. Halfway to the camping area, a khaki-shirted and mustached deputy vectored hard across an open parking lot to intercept us and ask me why I had a camera and a notepad.

Surely it was just a coincidence, I said to White after the officer let us move on, that a battalion of overeager cops was stationed next to Ron Paul's

grassroots-anarchist convention. "Not a chance," she said. I remembered a T-shirt I'd seen earlier that morning. WHO TOLD YOU I WAS PARANOID? it asked. WAS IT THE GOVERNMENT?

When activists in Tampa talked to me in ways that would in other settings sound crazy, I kept an open mind. Why, one man asked me sotto voce, did the Department of Homeland Security purchase more than a billion rounds of ammunition in one six-month period last year? "Maybe the Forest Service needs them," I said. "You know, for shooting bears." He arched an eyebrow.

Back at my hotel, I searched online for an answer to his question. But aside from a story on Infowars.com, the website of the popular libertarian conspiracist Alex Jones, I couldn't find any coverage. When I contacted the Department of Homeland Security, I received an email explaining that the bullets are part of a "strategic sourcing effort to combine multiple previous contracts in order to leverage the purchasing power of the entire Department"—in other words, they were buying in bulk to save money. The five-year supply, I was told, will be distributed to the 135,000 or so gun-carrying personnel who fall under the department's jurisdiction.

This might strike the average American as government waste. But to a suspicious libertarian, and to Ron Paul himself, every armed federal agent is a tool of violent tyranny; each bullet represents a dead American. This paranoid streak gives libertarianism's outer reaches an edge lacking even in typical right-wing media. Whereas Rush Limbaugh works in the service of the Republican Party, Alex Jones distrusts the entirety of the current power structure. Jones is a showman, a bully, and a devout Paulite, one whose friendship would pose a challenge to a more conventional politician. This past January, Jones made a spectacle of himself on CNN's *Piers Morgan Tonight*, calling the show's host a "hatchet man for the New World Order"; Ron Paul, rather than distancing himself, appeared a few days later on Jones's radio show.

I heard a lot of healthy skepticism at Paul Fest about the military-industrial complex, the Federal Reserve, the pharmaceutical industry, and the media. But I also sat through a lot of conspiracy

² In the past two election cycles, he was also the only major-party candidate to talk about ending the war on drugs and reducing our vast prison population.

talk, the kind that sees evil in too many places. As the nights in Tampa wore on and groups of activists talked over beers, I watched these dark theories take shape and fly.

There is a line from Paulite scripture that says, “I am an imperfect messenger, but the message is perfect.” Ashley Ryan and Amanda White both quoted this to me. One Paul Fest organizer from Long Island told me she is planning to have it tattooed across her back.

Ron Paul never could shake the stigma of a radical, nor did he really try. During a twelve-year absence from the House in the 1980s and '90s, he published monthly newsletters that abounded in racist paranoia. He denied having written the inflammatory content, but it doesn't much matter whether this is true. A man with his name once attached to a column about the “coming race war” was never going to be elected president. So Ron Paul's retirement may be the best thing yet to happen for his movement's political prospects.

The Liberty Movement is decentralized and spreading. Candidate Ron Paul always boasted of his vast small-donor base. But the nascent faction he leaves behind already has natural allies in Silicon Valley, home to wealthy iconoclasts who want to protect Internet freedom and like to be out in front of any emerging trend. Peter Thiel, a billionaire cofounder of PayPal and an early investor in Yelp and LinkedIn, donated \$2.6 million to the Endorse Liberty super PAC last year and could change the dynamic of any race he chooses. As a revered innovator, investor, and gay conservative, he also lends the Liberty Movement the kind of cultural capital the G.O.P. is critically lacking.

“This is the second time in my life that the party has gone through a fundamental change,” Doug Wead told me. A veteran of seven presidential campaigns and an evangelical Christian who specializes in coalition building, Wead thinks the Liberty Movement will ultimately deliver a bigger party shake-up than did the Christian Coalition he helped build in the 1980s. Paul's tribe has long yearned for total revolution, but what it gets may be a coalition. As Ron Paul put it in Tampa, “We will become the tent.”

All that's missing is a candidate. State-party takeovers are encouraging, Wead said, but it takes a national figure to spark a true prairie fire. “You can't win a general unless you can touch the hearts of the nation,” he said. Libertarian author Brian Doherty agreed with the strategy, but doubts that any such person currently exists. “I don't want to put this too dramatically, but there is no next Ron Paul,” he said. “It's nice that there is at least a Ron Paul-esque wing of the Republican Party, but

Rand is probably as close as they'll get.”

When Ron Paul's inexperienced son was unexpectedly swept into office in 2010, it marked the first time in history that a representative in the House would serve concurrently with his child in the Senate. Rand Paul has leveraged his father's legacy into a seat on the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. With his Tea Party and Bible Belt bona fides, Wead said, Rand Paul may be the only figure who can unite young libertarians with the still powerful evangelical base. “There is an almost universal sentiment that Rand is going to run [in 2016] and that he has a real chance.”

Listen closely to Rand Paul and you can already hear him stitching the coalition together. It begins with speaking the languages of different constituencies. “When you start talking to any subculture,” Wead said, “they can tell when you're not one of them. They know you're not from their neighborhood.” George H. W. Bush never could master the evangelical dialect. But his son, an actual born-again Christian, made an art of linguistic pandering. “He did it,” Wead said of the younger Bush's success. “He may have ruined the country, but he did it.”

For Rand, the father's cautious Old Right foreign policy is now a Christian foreign policy. “When you read the Sermon on the Mount,” he said in Tampa, “it doesn't say anywhere in there, ‘Blessed are the war makers.’” Wead thinks the coalition can even defuse polarizing social issues. “If the Constitution allows me to practice my faith, then I have to accept that it also gives rights to homosexuals,” he explained. “There are evangelicals coming around to this,” Wead said, “and I know because I'm one of them.”

While the strategists try to work a miracle out of Rand and the Liberty Movement attempts to retool the party, high-profile and mainstream candidates are likely to move in on this game. Most Americans have never heard a moderate libertarian voice, but a politician looking to attract the next generation of conservatives will eventually have to pick up fragments of Paulite language.

A handful have already tried. In his Charlotte speech, Jindal said:

We must quit “big.” We are not the party of big business, big banks, big Wall Street bailouts, big corporate loopholes, or big anything. We must not be the party that simply protects the well off so they can keep their toys.

In a December interview with London's *Daily Telegraph*, former Utah governor Jon Huntsman said the Republican Party is “a holding company that's devoid of a soul.” He called “crony capitalism” the Democrats' greatest weakness in the coming years. “The state will grow, and as the state grows, so do all the ancillary and subsidiary functions of lobbyists and K Street advisers. And that's stuff that Americans hate.” The winning formula for Republicans, Huntsman said, will have to include “a strong dose of libertarianism.”

David Lane was an odd choice to deliver the invocation at the We Are the Future Rally. The Christian political activist has been an outspoken booster of such anti-Paulites as Mike Huckabee, Newt Gingrich, and Rick Perry. At first the crowd was respectful, but when Lane asked them to join him in praying that Jesus “return America to our Judeo-Christian roots,” a man in the lower mezzanine booed, loud and long. It was a lone voice, but no one hushed him, and the outburst was the first of many that cut against the grain of our accepted political narratives. The Paulites may oppose government power, but they loathe what currently passes for conservatism even more.

Their loudest jeers were directed not at President Obama and Nancy Pelosi but at Rick Santorum, who over time emerged as the rally's favored whipping boy. Sean Hannity, Rush Limbaugh, and Rudy Giuliani were all roundly booed. Jack Hunter, the

REVOLUTION's resident radio host and blogger, gave a speech that took direct aim at the Liberty Movement's most intimate foes: the mouthpieces of the anti-intellectual right. "Simply hating the other side is not an ideology," he said. "It's childishness, and it's useless."

Doug Wead held the rally stage like a pastor on Sunday, and in his stentorian bellows, he led the flock through psalms of populist indignation. He opened with a story about an establishment Republican blogger who had called the rally an exercise "in bad taste." "Bad taste," Wead countered, "is auditing a waitress to make sure she pays taxes on her tip money, but not auditing the Federal Reserve." The crowd went bananas.

The tone was less bitter than at a Tea Party rally, the talking points more specific than at an Occupy encampment, and the whole thing far less polished than any Democratic or Republican party production. The speeches and musical acts varied wildly. John Popper, the front man of Blues Traveler, played his harmonica and spoofed a call to Rick Santorum's cell phone. Singer Aimee Allen screamed "Wake up!" to open her "Ron Paul Anthem." Jordan Page, "the revolution's own troubadour," strutted the stage in a cowboy hat and jeans and at first glance could have been a terribly normal act of acoustic Americana. But his "The Light of Revolution" is straight protest, an anarchic cry of skeptical discontent. "They say that truth is treason in the empire of lies," Page sings, paraphrasing Ron Paul paraphrasing Orwell.

Have you ever seen a talking head on
television sway
the people through deception, telling
lies to earn his pay?

Can't you feel the ground shake these
institution walls?

Well I'll watch them fall, when I stand
with Dr. Paul.

More than four hours after the rally started, the hero took the podium. They stood and cheered him to embarrassment, their kindly prophet of purity and peace, and he rotated stiffly in the downpour of adoration. Two square bodyguards in blazers and army flattops flanked him like lions at a temple gate, and as the amber pixels of a giant Con-

stitution floated behind him, Ron Paul began a sermon on the history of modern society in the West. He told his congregants that they were "living at a time that an era is ending" and offered quotes from one of his favorite books, *Dr. Zhivago*. "What about 1913?" he asked; a chorus of knowing boos went up, and a young man's voice rang out: "Screw 1913!" Year Zero on the Paulian calendar: the birth of the Federal Reserve, America's original sin, Ron Paul's white whale, and proof that what seems permanent was once just an idea. With little further prompting, 10,000 people erupted in their favorite chorus: "End the Fed! End the Fed! End the Fed!" The spindly philosopher smiled, leaned into the microphone, and replied, "Good idea."

His Tampa speech had just one moment of intemperance. Paul told the crowd that an unnamed critic had recently claimed that "if those Paul people had been in charge, Osama bin Laden would still be alive." To this, Paul reacted with uncharacteristic fury:

So would the three thousand people from 9/11 be alive! And so would the eighty-five hundred Americans who were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. They would be alive as well! Also those forty-four thousand military personnel who have come back severely injured and ... hundreds of thousands suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome as well as brain injuries. If you take that and add in four trillion dollars, our side wins that argument by a long shot.

The same claims that made him the mockery of so many primary debates are still his core gospel. "He's the only politician willing to judge America's foreign policy adventures by the same moral standard we apply to other countries' foreign policy adventures," Brian Doherty writes in *Ron Paul's REVOLUTION*. That consistency, combined with the premium placed on peace, is the spiritual bedrock on which the Paulite's righteousness rests. When Amanda White said goodbye to me in Tampa, she smiled and waved and said, "In liberty." Jack Hunter told the Paulites that liberty "is the cause of our lives." A lot of people dislike the Fed for a variety of reasons, but suppressed interest rates don't galvanize a generational movement. Nonviolence is the

thing that tells the Paulites they are right and everyone else is wrong.

Days later, after Isaac had side-swiped the Gulf Coast and Paul and his family had flown back to Texas, I noticed a crude little cardboard sign sticking out of the ground on a Tampa byway, miles from anywhere. SAVE US RON PAUL, it said. Establishment Republicans write it all off as a cult of personality, and with the endless chanting and uncomfortable messianism, that's an easy charge to make. But Ron Paul did not go from congressional outlier to latter-day Jesus by being charismatic. People don't go to a Ron Paul speech to witness great oratory. They go to hear something they can't find anywhere else.

American politics thrives on religious subtexts. There are always mountains to climb, spirits to cast out, eternities to promise. Barack Obama's reelection may not herald end-time for the G.O.P., but for the conservative movement as a whole, Obama's second term is the cataclysm that marks the end of an era. The next winning Republican coalition won't look like the last. It won't be racially or culturally homogeneous. Nor will it sound the same. It will adopt new positions and policies. It will make at least some effort to attract young people.

The Paulites may reject the moralizing laws of the evangelical base, but their movement is its own kind of religion, one no less guided by faith, rapture, and revelation. During his 2012 campaign, Ron Paul spoke at more than thirty college campuses nationwide, and since his retirement, he has been touring schools again. There is a recurring theme in these speeches: he talks about the "remnant" of small-government, Old Right Taft conservatives hiding dispersed and dormant in the body politic. "There is always a remnant," he says, "that clings to the truth of things. ... You don't know who they are or where they are, and you don't know how many." These gnostics wander a shattered world, hold and protect the teachings of their prophets, and await their deliverance. After three losing presidential campaigns and decades of not getting his way in Congress, Ron Paul the man is finally gone. Four months into his political afterlife, the Ron Paul movement is here to stay. ■

BLINDED BY THE RIGHT?

How hippie Christians begat evangelical conservatives

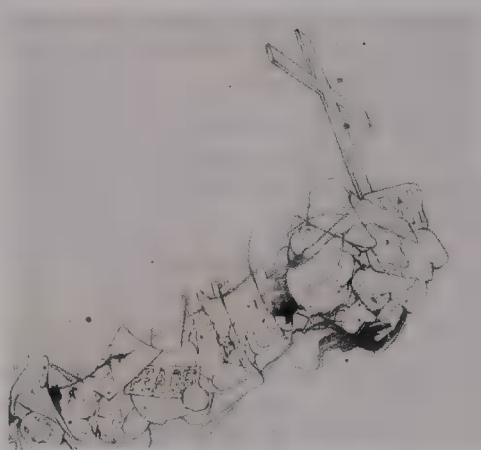
By T. M. Luhrmann

Betsy Jackson voted for John McCain in 2008. She greatly admired Sarah Palin. She thought the Alaska governor was brilliant and witty, and that she took a ferocious beating from the media because she was a woman in the limelight and that's what the media does to such women. Jackson also loved that Palin did not keep her Christianity "quiet."

These views are not unusual for someone in Jackson's demographic. She is what she calls a "spirit-empowered" evangelical Christian, meaning one strongly influenced by Pentecostal practices. She is sixty-one, a gracious, gregarious, attractive woman with a big laugh and a warm smile. She lives in a sprawling suburb in southern California, the kind of planned subdivision where all the streets meet at right angles and the strip malls repeat themselves remorselessly every fifteen to twenty blocks, in a modest house filled with Bible commentaries and other Christian books. Her town borders Orange County, a Republican stronghold, and many of her white neighbors who identify with a political party call themselves Republican, as do the vast majority of evangelical Christians nationwide.

But you would not have predicted Jackson's current political views from her early life. She grew up in a staunchly Democratic household, the child of uneducated Catholics who would no more vote for a Republican than they

would walk naked into traffic. On their living-room wall hung a black-velvet painting of JFK, next to the one of Elvis. Jackson's mother was a farmer's daughter from the Midwest, and her father was an Italian immigrant who did scientific work on a military base ("All of his stuff is classified, that's all I ever knew").



They lived a comfortable, conventional lifestyle, but by the mid-Sixties, Jackson decided that it was an empty lie. Her parents quarreled, and the household that seemed so overtly proper was often full of anguish. Jackson's sister withdrew and became the perfect student. Jackson herself discovered drugs. They were dirt cheap, they were plentiful, and there wasn't much else to do in the Mojave Desert. And at least the drug culture was a kind of community, bound together by the trust you're forced to develop when you're breaking the law.

Jackson and her peers not only rejected the staid middle-class life of their parents, they set out to create a new world. They dressed differently. They lived communally, moving from apart-

ment to apartment together. They shared everything—clothes, money, cars, bodies—and they behaved as if it should all come free. They were furious at the government for waging war but also for not providing them with shelter, food, medical care. They thought these basic needs were basic rights.

"Politically," Jackson explained to me last summer, sitting in her tidy living room, "I was very left. I mean left, left, left, as far as you could get." She was protesting constantly against the Vietnam War, of course, but also spoke up for the legalization of marijuana and for every other progressive cause that came along.

Then she became a Christian. She still went to protests. She was still a hippie. She still wore bell-bottoms: "We'd cut our bells, and we'd insert even more, so they were like four feet around. It was all that—the flowers, the backless dresses, the whole thing." But within a few years she was voting Republican, and the backless dresses lay dumped in a box in her closet. Her roommate had asked her what Jesus would think if he walked into the living room and found her wearing one of them.

The Christian youth movement of the late 1960s is one of the most important and least studied in American religious history, and it involved hundreds of thousands or perhaps millions of people across the country. It was this movement that pushed American evangelical Christianity into the mainstream in the decades after the Vietnam War—and was the source of

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its distinctive, lilting music, its come-as-you-are informality, its charismatic intimacy with God.

Of course, American evangelicalism has deeper, older roots, but the hippies changed what it meant to be Christian in America. They made speaking in tongues common. They made reading the Bible literally a mainstream practice. They made the idea of Rapture—the process by which believers will be spirited up to heaven when Jesus returns for the Second Coming—a cultural touchstone.

But they also went through a dramatic political transformation. We know that most evangelicals are now vehemently right-wing, and that most hippies were decidedly not. They seem to have been largely apolitical or, like Betsy Jackson, on the left. (A 2004 survey of more than 800 former hippie Christians found that only 22 percent thought of themselves as politically conservative back in the 1960s, whereas 57 percent had come to describe themselves that way.) So what transformed an Aquarian ethos woven around gentle Christian communalism into a fiery form of conservatism?

One way to tell the story is that the rightward shift was sheer accident: the happenstance of which pastors were on hand when the hippies first became Christians, and who continued to dominate the movement as nonhippies joined its ranks. The Jesus People, as the movement was sometimes called, largely began in California, spurred by an intense search for meaning amid the social chaos of the time. By 1967, the Summer of Love, as many as 100,000 young people had found their way to San Francisco. They thought they were leaving behind a corrupt world of hypocritical elders and joining a revolution.

What they found was a city in which municipal services had collapsed. There was little free food, limited housing, and almost no police presence to speak of. They kept coming, and many simply slept on the streets at night, hungry and unwashed. Women were at particular risk: even before that famous summer, a hippie broadsheet remarked that “rape is as common as bullshit on Haight Street.”

Many Americans were bewildered by the movement. But some evangelicals—including Billy Graham, then at the

zenith of his fame—understood and even approved of its members’ search for meaning (if not their use of LSD). After observing a group of hippie Christians from his float in the 1971 Rose Bowl Parade, Graham wrote that he “had an almost irrepressible urge to get into the street and identify with them.” A few pastors began to venture into the constant disorderly party that was Haight-Ashbury. They offered coffee, food, relative safety—and, of course, the gospel. In a storefront called the Living Room, a young pastor and his wife painted scriptural verses and a psychedelic oxbow on the walls, and gave out coffee and soup donated by a local grocer. An estimated 20,000 people came through their doors in two years.

The Jesus that emerged in Haight-Ashbury looked a lot like a hippie, with long hair, sandals, and flowing robes. He, too, was a radical revolutionary. He, too, had a vision of an utterly transformed world in which people would be who they *could* be, not who they were raised to be. And of course Jesus hung out on the street and (in the words of a popular poster of the time) associated with “known criminals, radicals, subversives, prostitutes and street people.”

By 1971, there were Christian hippies in Washington and Wichita and Dallas and Detroit. There were as many as 600 Christian coffeehouses nationwide. Thousands of people had been baptized in the ocean, teenagers with dripping clothes and goofy smiles. The cover of the June 21 issue of *Time* showed the familiar face of Jesus framed in acid orange. Inside, an unsigned article read:

Jesus is alive and well and living in the radiant spiritual fervor of a growing number of young Americans. If any one mark clearly identifies them, it is their total belief in an awesome, supernatural Jesus Christ, not just a marvelous man who lived 2,000 years ago, but a living God.

A year later, the movement had picked up enough steam to attract a crowd of 75,000 to a single event in Dallas.

The Jesus People kept the clothes and the hairstyles, the communes, the street papers and the rock music. They traded the intense high of hallucinogens for the intense high of Pentecostal-

style spiritual experience, sometimes intermingling the two. And the most important clergyman to take charge of them was Chuck Smith, the new straight-arrow pastor at Calvary Chapel, an undistinguished nondenominational church in Costa Mesa, California.

Smith had been raised Pentecostal, but had come to find his faith constricting, even claustrophobic. The churches that had banded together under the label “fundamentalist” were typically so world-rejecting that some of them even forbade congregants to vote. Now pastors like Smith began to reach back toward the mainstream. The pot-smoking, draft-dodging hippies on Huntington Beach troubled and fascinated him, and he thought they needed help. He urged his daughters to introduce him to a few of them.

“One evening around five o’clock our doorbell rang,” Smith later recalled in an article for the Calvary Chapel website. He opened the door to greet “a real, honest-to-goodness hippie—long hair, beard, flowers in his hair, bells on the cuffs of his pants.” This was Lonnie Frisbee, soon to be a linchpin of the movement, who had drifted south from San Francisco, preaching on the beaches.

The hippies often had nowhere to stay. Smith, through Frisbee, offered them his house. Then he rented a second house for them—and, as they kept coming, arranged for another one. He kept his services casual, so that the rebels who hated middle-class tickytackiness (as Pete Seeger called it in 1963’s “Little Boxes”) could feel comfortable in church. Smith took the pulpit on Sunday, but he gave Wednesday evenings to Frisbee. “The doors blew open at that point,” a congregant recalls in a documentary about Frisbee. The Jesus who presided over these sessions was the countercultural Jesus: personally attentive, unconditionally loving, a Jesus who offered a great big bear hug of acceptance.

Within six months, Calvary Chapel grew from 200 congregants to 2,000. They ran out of space at the original church, rented a larger one, and outgrew that too. They purchased ten acres on the outskirts of Costa Mesa, put up a circus tent capable of holding 1,600 folding chairs, and began planning back-to-back services. Smith remembers

looking out over the vast empty space before the first congregants showed up: "I had never seen so many folding chairs in all my life! I turned to Duane [a volunteer] and I asked, 'How long do you suppose it will take the Lord to fill

to cocaine. She never did much LSD—she was scared of hallucinogens—but she smoked plenty of pot. When she enrolled in community college in Bakersfield, she also began selling. About twice a month, she drove to

But Jackson had nowhere else to go. She wasn't crawling back to her parents' conventional life—she had seen that and come to loathe it. She moved in with her sister in San Diego, but soon parted ways with the good girl of



this place?" He looked at his watch and said, 'I'd say just about eleven hours.'"

Duane was right. By 1973 they had built a permanent sanctuary that could seat 2,200, and within three weeks they were holding triple services. Today there are hundreds of Calvary Chapel churches in the United States, and thousands more like them. Smith has trained hundreds, perhaps thousands, of pastors. And like most of the old-time evangelicals who reached out to the hippies, he is politically conservative.

By the time of her high school graduation, Betsy Jackson was addicted

San Francisco and spent the weekend in Haight-Ashbury. She would sell there, going from one party to another, sampling the drugs and hanging out. She was part of the revolution, and she was making money hand over fist—enough to buy herself a Porsche, which she drove up and down the freeway to San Francisco like an advertisement for the California dream.

Except that after a while, it didn't seem so romantic. She began to realize that Haight-Ashbury had "a real sleazy side" to it. She thought that a lot of the people she met there were naïve, too innocent to recognize that they were being used.

the family. Somewhere along the way, she visited an addiction-treatment center, but she didn't like it. Jackson left with the Bible they gave her, but she never opened it.

One day when she was twenty-one and living in Ocean Beach, she came home to find that her boyfriend had become a Christian. Just like that. He had met someone who told him that he wouldn't get to heaven unless he accepted Jesus, and so he accepted him. He'd been deep into LSD and mescaline, but by the time Jackson returned from work, he had renounced alcohol and drugs and begun to speak in tongues.

The remarkable thing—and best proof of Jackson's claim that she hated the life she was living but didn't know how to get out—is that she took this at face value. "I was listening to him," she told me, "and something inside said, He's right, he's right, he's right."

She had always believed in God, even though she hadn't attended church in the years since her confirmation. When someone told her about a church group that met close to her apartment, she decided to give it a chance. They played guitar and dressed like she did, and she enjoyed it. Jackson started going regularly. She was still smoking dope and doing cocaine and going to psychedelic concerts where people blissed out to strobe lights and the guys onstage wore glitter in their hair. Yet now she found the tension between the two worlds terribly confusing.

She began to pray with a young woman she liked. She shared an apartment with this woman and found an expanding group of kindred souls. Jackson thought this new version of the communal life might give people what they'd originally sought from the counterculture: a different way of being in the world, a better way, a revolution that they *wanted* to belong to.

"We had done it our way," Jackson recalls, "but it wasn't working." Jesus offered them what they couldn't create for themselves. It was the community she'd wanted, but with rules. No sex outside marriage. No charade that sharing your body was a political act. No lying. No stealing. No assuming that just because the capitalists were pigs anyone could make off with your personal property.

Slowly, without rehab, Jackson got herself off drugs. And now she began to vote Republican—because that's the way people in church voted. The group house she had joined was a Calvary Chapel offshoot, founded by a man who had himself been an addict before finding his way to faith. And like Chuck Smith, Mike MacIntosh, who now presides over a San Diego megachurch, was and is quite conservative politically.

The politics made Jackson a little nervous at first, but soon she began to feel comfortable. It made sense that

the scriptural was political—that what the Bible said about marriage became the way you voted on marriage. If the biblical interpretation sometimes seemed surprising to her—well, she was new at this.

Of course, this is a tempting narrative for secular liberals. It suggests that these people just stumbled into their politics—that when the hippies encountered old-time evangelical pastors, they followed them inexorably to the right.

The standard corollary to this stumbling-into-the-stable account is to suggest that a few savvy individuals figured out how to manipulate these new Christians by making politics all about abortion. There's something to this. When the Supreme Court established the right to legal abortion in 1973, the decision shocked Christians like Jackson and spurred them to take political action. Yet this shock was hardly inevitable. Although the idea that the Bible forbids abortion has become a kind of received wisdom in our culture, the scriptural derivation is ambiguous. The Bible never actually mentions abortion, which was legal under Roman law, and Exodus distinguishes between the murder of a person and the murder of a fetus. The first is punishable by death, the second by a fine.

In the mid-1970s, then, the argument still needed to be made, and specific individuals stepped forward to make it. The most important of these was Francis Schaeffer, whom many observers now credit with jump-starting the religious right. Nobody, argues the historian Preston Shires, "was more influential in bringing evangelicals to a pro-life position, the position that made political activism not only possible but potent."

Earlier in his career, Schaeffer had been apolitical. He was a quirky Christian. He read the Bible the way the Jesus People read it: true as written and relevant for today. But he ran what was a cross between a philosophy seminar and a spiritual retreat in L'Abri, Switzerland, and people of all religious stripes attended it. He seems to have been regarded as a kind of hippie Socrates—challenging, questioning, and supremely confident of his intellectual authority. In the early

1970s, he became part of the elite Washington circuit, and, as a friend of Jack Kemp, was more warmly received by Republicans than by Democrats. Still, he refused to align himself with any political party.

Then came *Roe v. Wade*. In Schaeffer's view, the Christian faith mandated the protection of *all* life, even the smallest—and therefore abortion was an un-Christian act. Three years after the Supreme Court's decision, he published a book entitled *How Should We Then Live?*, which argued that the world had been undergoing a slow-motion ethical collapse since the Renaissance, when God had been displaced from his rightful place at the center of our lives. There were, Schaeffer wrote, two alternatives: a moral existence based on God's revelation in the Bible, and an amoral, totalitarian existence. In that equation, liberal Christianity came out more or less in the same place as Nazism and Stalinism. Abortion was Schaeffer's symbol for what was fundamentally wrong with the modern era.

How Should We Then Live? became a runaway bestseller and then the basis for a ten-part film series that led many Christians into politics. (Michele Bachmann has repeatedly noted that the films had a "profound influence" on her life.)

When people talk about their time as hippie Christians, abortion does indeed become the dividing point, the River Jordan, between their countercultural past and their present. I sat at my kitchen table last summer with an ex-hippie evangelical pastor, Ken Wilson, and asked him why the Jesus People had become so conservative. "Abortion," he replied without hesitation. With *Roe*, the choice became clear: Democrats would support abortion, so you couldn't vote for them.

Jackson became politically active only with Operation Rescue, the evangelical crusade to end abortion. She would stand and shout in front of clinics and hand out pamphlets and get onto buses to talk young pregnant girls into making a different decision. And suddenly she was taking conservative positions on a whole cluster of additional issues—marriage (no divorce), homosexuality (always wrong). Calvary Chapel never preached politics from

the pulpit, she said, only values. But values, as Jackson was quick to concede, ultimately told you how to vote.

Wilson told me that he, too, had been part of Operation Rescue. But soon, he said, he noticed that the people on his side of the picket line were white and affluent, and that many of the women on the other side of the line were not. And he thought that if Jesus showed up, Jesus might not be standing on his side. So he quit. Which is to say that the issue of abortion, for all the powerful emotions it stirred up, seems insufficient on its own to explain what happened to the Jesus People.

There is yet another way to tell the story, which is that the politics of the Christian hippies never really changed—that the movement they fostered carries those values still. Hippies hated the government and anything that smacked of the establishment, just as many evangelicals do today. In this telling of the story, what began as the Jesus People ended up as the Tea Party.

There is truth to this version as well. When Larry Eskridge, the leading historian of the Jesus People, went to a Midwest reunion of former Christian hippies in 2010, quite a few made it clear that their hearts were with the Tea Party. And then there is the former Christian hippie I spoke to last summer, Don Anderson. He first encountered Lonnie Frisbee when the young preacher and his wife were living in the basement of a commune in northern California called the House of Acts. "It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life," Anderson told me, "because as I walked down the stairs, it was as though I was walking into a swimming pool of warm liquid, which was the love of God.... There's tie-dye hangings and incense burning. [My wife is] lying there. She's weeping. She's laughing. She's singing in tongues."

Anderson, who is now conservative, told me that he did not think of himself as political during his hippie days. But he said that he and his peers were clear back then that institutional authority was their enemy: "There was a tremendous sense of the way institutions—family, community,

civil government, college administrators, the whole thing—had been manipulating and exercising power for their own sake." He sees that same resistance to institutional control as a core value of the Tea Party.

Jackson, too, distrusts the government. She recoils from anything that smacks of socialism, which she defines as "where everybody gets what everybody else has." So she abhors Obamacare, and welfare, and any other scheme concocted by the people sitting in "those big mansions."

But Jackson's not a member of the Tea Party. For that matter, neither is Anderson. They both find the Tea Party too radical.

In the end, there is a version of this story that trumps, at least to some degree, those I have already told. This is also a version that many secular liberals miss, because they get sidetracked by politics they despise and they assume evangelical Christians are sheep who follow the fools at the head of their party. This story begins with what it meant for young Seventies-era Christians to follow Jesus seriously.

The radical innovation of the Jesus movement was the claim that Jesus is a person—not only historically, but now—and that he has a personal relationship with you in particular. This Jesus thinks, feels, loves, weeps, and gets angry, just the way he did in Palestine. You can ask him what shirt you should wear and what shampoo to buy. He's *alive*, and he wants to have the kind of friendship with you that you have with your best friend, only better. The words sound commonplace these days: this is the way most evangelical Christians talk about God (the word "God" is often used interchangeably with "Jesus" in this context). But they weren't commonplace in 1965.

This way of thinking about God profoundly changes the way the believer believes. If God is present in a literal sense, you no longer need to turn to intermediaries to learn what his wishes are. You can ask him yourself.

Of course, that raises as many questions as it answers. In the Gospels, Jesus says, "Follow me." But he does not say precisely how. His parables often make little sense, and his followers rarely understand them. In one



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Gospel, his parents behave at one point as if he has lost his mind. Again and again, Jesus seems to look directly at the reader and ask: "Who do you say I am?"

This is, arguably, the central question of Christianity. And when the hippie Christians discovered Jesus, they came to him in the wake of 2,000 years of interpretation and exegesis. It would be naïve to imagine that they truly grasped him in a fresh and immediate way—and discovered, by means of prayer and immersion in Scripture, who he was.

But that seems to have been what it felt like for them. When they talk about Jesus, they recount how hard it was in the beginning, when they could barely recognize what God was saying to them. Eventually they came to view him as an imaginary friend who was also real—held in the imagination and shaped through their reading of the Bible. Yet there is almost always a sophisticated awareness that what they are imputing to God might not be God after all, but their own fickle thoughts.

Almost all evangelicals talk about faith in these terms—as a discovery process in which you are trying to understand who God is, and what he wants from you. But what are the consequences of this belief when it comes to thinking about politics? Evangelical Christians are always imagining themselves as who God *wants them to be*, rather than as who they are. Faith becomes a matter of aspiration, not acceptance. The person you can be and should be is always emerging from the person you are. (Evangelicals call this "growing in God" or "walking with God.")

So when Betsy Jackson became a Christian, Democrats soon struck her as too whiny, and too tolerant of human weakness. Oh, she had problems with their lack of family values, but what mainly troubled her was their sense that people needed help from the government, that they couldn't make it on their own. "God intends us to work," she told me. What she had once thought of as rights—food, shelter, medical care—she now considered handouts. And she chastised the countercultural moocher she once had been: "Back in the hippie days, we were

all entitled. We all felt that. I think we all grow out of that. Hopefully."

You could call this knee-jerk individualism, and many Democrats do. Barack Obama made news during the 2012 presidential campaign (and launched a thousand mocking rejoinders from the G.O.P.) when he told a Virginia audience, "If you've got a business, you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen."

Of course Obama was right in a certain sense: nobody builds a business without the infrastructure government provides. But to people like Jackson, what really matters is individual responsibility—and in this view of the world, the prototype for sin is addiction. That is not new. Augustine drew a similar parallel in his *Confessions*. But Augustine was describing the human condition of frailty, and the difficulty of doing what we know we should: "I was held back not by the fetters put on me by someone else, but by the iron bondage of my own will."

In contemporary American evangelicalism, sin-as-addiction is modeled more directly on substance abuse. "We are all addicts!" roared a leader at a 2006 Wheaton College conference I attended. He strode back and forth on the stage, gesturing wildly with his fist, insisting that we turned to addiction to cope with our disappointing jobs and lackluster marriages.

For Jackson, then, "dependence" is the real problem. "I am all for those kinds of government programs that help people in the interim," she says. "It's when we become dependent on them—that's where we cross the line."

"I think welfare was good when it started," she tells me. "I think unions were good when they started. But I think they have just gone crazy. And now, we've created monsters. And I feel like the Democrats would just keep feeding these monsters."

Monsters: it is like a vision from Revelation, where the Beast surged forth with demonic strength to grab the land, and the servants of the Lord rode out in armor to the battle. Here personal and spiritual growth are on the side of the angels, and handouts are on the side of the Beast. When we deprive ourselves or our loved ones of responsibilities, Jackson insists, "we've stunted them. And that keeps them

from progressing forward, being what they can be, what they want to be, what they were meant to be."

This view of Democrats as almost apocalyptic enablers would seem to be very bad news for the party, and for secular liberals in general. Yet many of the latter would agree that help is good and dependency bad. Moreover, there are signs that the right-wing evangelical coalition is breaking down. I met numerous Democrats and independent voters during the ten years I spent researching American evangelicalism. And many young people raised in evangelical families are far more liberal than their parents on such issues as homosexuality and the environment.

But in the meantime, it will be hard for Democrats to reach evangelicals unless they appreciate that the way evangelicals imagine politics is fundamentally different. When secular liberals vote, they think about the outcome of a political choice. They think about consequences. Secular liberals want to create the social conditions that will allow everyday people, behaving the way such people behave, to avoid making things worse. The idea that human beings are imperfect is built right into the equation.

When evangelicals vote, they think about what kind of people they are trying to *become*. They subscribe to at least a vague notion of human perfectibility, as long as the effort is undertaken with God's help. From this perspective, the problem with government is that it steps in when people fall short, preventing them from being the people God wants them to be. And here is where the thinking of the hippie Christians—their contempt for government, their longing for a personal relationship with Jesus, their jaundiced view of drugs—fused with that of the evangelical mainstream. Their contemporary descendants *still* hate what they see as the ultimate drug: the human addiction to easy solutions. Someone like Betsy Jackson would rather struggle to change on her own, alternately heeding God and ignoring him. "I still battle with wanting to do it my way," she tells me. "That's a daily struggle. You know? I always think I have a better idea than God." ■

A DELICATE TRUTH

By John le Carré

On the second floor of a characterless hotel in the British Crown Colony of Gibraltar, a lithe, agile man in his late fifties restlessly paced his bedroom. His very British features, though pleasant and plainly honorable, indicated a choleric nature brought to the limit of its endurance. A distraught lecturer, you might have thought, observing the bookish forward lean and loping stride and the errant forelock of salt-and-pepper hair that repeatedly had to be disciplined with jerky backhanded shoves of the bony wrist. Certainly it would not have occurred to many people, even in their most fanciful dreams, that he was a middle-ranking British civil servant, hauled from his desk in one of the more prosaic departments of Her Majesty's Foreign & Commonwealth Office to be dispatched on a top-secret mission of acute sensitivity.

His assumed first name, as he insisted on repeating to himself, sometimes half aloud, was Paul, and his second—not exactly hard to remember—was Anderson. If he turned on the television set it said *Welcome, Mr. Paul Anderson. Why not enjoy a complimentary pre-dinner aperitif in our Lord Nelson's Snug!* The exclamation mark in place of the more appropriate question mark was a source of constant annoyance to the pedant in him. He was wearing the hotel's bathrobe of white toweling and he had been wearing it ever since his incarceration, except when vainly trying to sleep or, once only, slinking upstairs at an unsociable hour to eat alone in a rooftop brasserie washed with the fumes of chlorine from a third-floor swimming pool

across the road. Like much else in the room, the bathrobe, too short for his long legs, reeked of stale cigarette smoke and lavender air freshener.

As he paced, he determinedly acted out his feelings to himself without the restraints customary in his official life, his features one moment cramped in honest perplexity, the next glowering in the full-length mirror that was screwed to the tartan wallpaper. Here and there he spoke to himself by way of relief or exhortation. Also half aloud? What was the difference when you were banged up in an empty room with nobody to listen to you but a color-tinted photograph of our dear young Queen on a brown horse?

On a plastic-topped table lay the remnants of a club sandwich that he had pronounced dead on arrival, and an abandoned bottle of warm Coca-Cola. Though it came hard to him, he had permitted himself no alcohol since he had taken possession of the room. The bed, which he had learned to detest as no other, was large enough for six, but he had only to stretch out on it for his back to give him hell. A radiant crimson counterpane of imitation silk lay over it, and on the counterpane an innocent-looking cell phone which he had been assured was modified to the highest state of encryption, and, though he was of little faith in such matters, he could only suppose it was. Each time he passed it, his gaze fixed on it with a mixture of reproach, longing, and frustration.

I regret to inform you, Paul, that you will be totally incommunicado, save for operational purposes,

John le Carré is the author of more than twenty novels. A Delicate Truth, from which this is the first chapter, will be published in May by Penguin. Page border illustrations by Danijel Žeželj

throughout your mission, the laborious South African voice of Elliot, his self-designated field commander, is warning him. *Should an unfortunate crisis afflict your fine family during your absence they will pass their concerns to your office's welfare department, whereupon contact with you will be made. Do I make myself clear, Paul?*

You do, Elliot, little by little you do.

Reaching the overlarge picture window at the further end of the room, he scowled upward through the grimy net curtains at Gibraltar's legendary Rock which, sallow, wrinkled, and remote, scowled back at him like an angry dowager. Yet again, out of habit and impatience, he examined his alien wristwatch and compared it with the green numerals on the radio clock beside the bed. The watch was of battered steel with a black dial, a replacement for the gold Cartier presented to him on their twenty-fifth by his beloved wife on the strength of an inheritance from one of her many deceased aunts.

But hang on a minute! *Paul hasn't got a bloody wife!* Paul Anderson has no wife, no daughter. Paul Anderson's a bloody hermit!

"Can't have you wearing *that*, Paul darling, can we now?" a motherly woman his own age is saying to him a lifetime ago in the redbrick suburban villa near Heathrow airport where she and her sisterly colleague are dressing him for the part. "Not with those nice initials engraved on it, can we? You'd have to say you'd nicked it off of somebody married, wouldn't you, Paul?"

Sharing the joke, determined as ever to be a good chap by his own lights, he looks on while she writes *Paul* on an adhesive label and locks his gold watch away in a cashbox with his wedding ring for what she calls *the duration*.

How in God's name did I ever get to end up in this hellhole in the first place?

Did I jump or was I pushed? Or was it a bit of both?

Describe, please, in a few well-chosen circuits of the room, the precise circumstances of your unlikely journey from blessed monotony to solitary confinement on a British colonial rock.

"So how's your poor dear wife?" asks the not-quite-superannuated ice queen of the Personnel Department, now grandly rechristened Human Resources for no reason known to man, having summoned him without a word of explanation to her lofty bower on a Friday evening when all good citizens are hurrying home. The two are old adversaries. If they have anything at all in common, it is the feeling that there are so few of them left.

"Thank you, Audrey, not poor at all, I am pleased to say," he replies, with the determined

levity he affects for such life-threatening encounters. "Dear but not poor. She remains in full remission. And you? In the pink of health, I trust?"

"So she's leavable," Audrey suggests, ignoring this kindly inquiry.

"My hat, no! In what sense?"—determinedly keeping up the jolly banter.

"In this sense: would four super-secret days abroad in a salubrious climate, just *possibly* running to five, be of any interest to you?"

"They could be of considerable possible interest, thank you, Audrey, as it happens. Our grown-up daughter is living with us at the moment, so the timing could scarcely be better, given that she happens to be a *medical doctor*," he can't resist adding in his pride, but Audrey remains unimpressed by his daughter's accomplishment.

"I don't know what it's about and I don't have to," she says, answering a question that he hasn't put to her. "There's a dynamic young junior minister called Quinn upstairs whom you may have heard of. He'd like to see you immediately. He's a new broom, in case word hasn't reached you in the far wastes of Logistical Contingencies, recently acquired from Defence—hardly a recommendation but there you are."

What on earth's she on about? Of course such news has reached him. He reads his newspapers, doesn't he? He watches *Newsnight*. Fergus Quinn, MP, Fergie to the world, is a Scottish brawler, a self-styled *bête intellectuelle* of the New Labour stable. On television he is vocal, belligerent, and alarming. Moreover, he prides himself on being the people's scourge of Whitehall's bureaucracy—a commendable virtue viewed from afar, but scarcely reassuring if you happen to be a Whitehall bureaucrat.

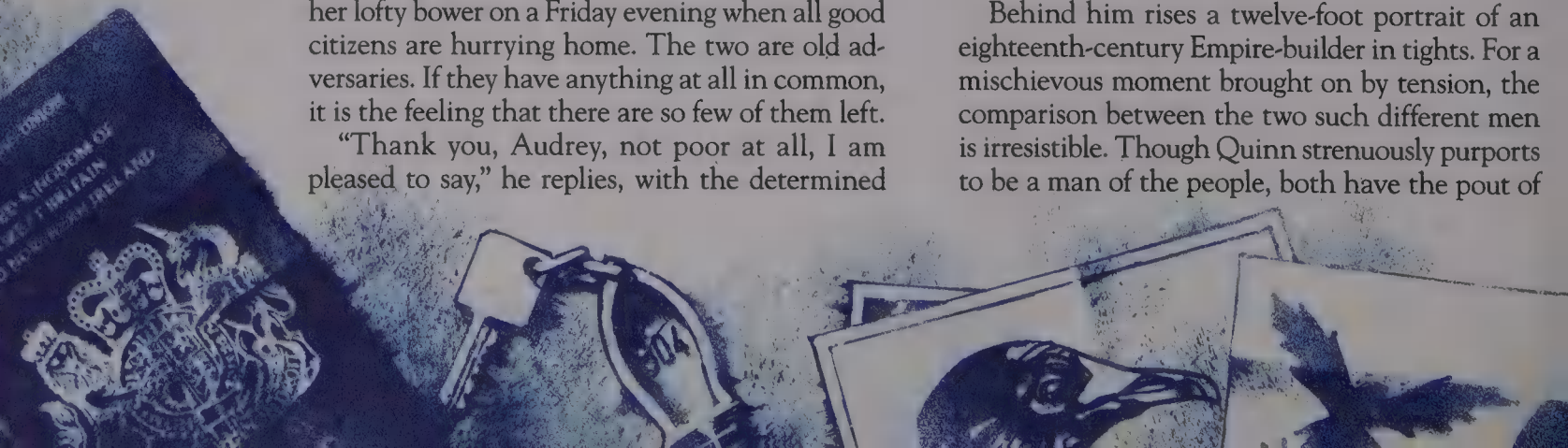
"You mean *now*, this minute, Audrey?"

"That is what I understand him to mean by *immediately*."

The ministerial anteroom is empty, its staff long departed. The ministerial mahogany door, solid as iron, stands ajar. Knock and wait? Or knock and push? He does a little of both, hears: "Don't just stand there. Come on in, and close the door behind you." He enters.

The dynamic young minister's bulk is squeezed into a midnight-blue dinner jacket. He is poised with a cell phone to his ear before a marble fireplace stuffed with red paper foil for flames. As on television, so in the flesh, he is stocky and thick-necked with close-cropped ginger hair and quick, greedy eyes set in a pugilist's face.

Behind him rises a twelve-foot portrait of an eighteenth-century Empire-builder in tights. For a mischievous moment brought on by tension, the comparison between the two such different men is irresistible. Though Quinn strenuously purports to be a man of the people, both have the pout of



privileged discontent. Both have their body weight on one leg and the other knee cocked. Is the dynamic young minister about to launch a punitive raid on the hated French? Will he, in the name of New Labour, berate the folly of the howling mob? He does neither, but with a gritty "Call you later, Brad" for his cell phone, stomps to the door, locks it, and swings round.

"They tell me you're a *seasoned member of the Service*, that right?" he says accusingly, in his carefully nurtured Glaswegian accent, after a head-to-toe inspection that seems to confirm his worst fears. "Cool head, whatever that means. Twenty years of *kicking around in foreign parts*, according to Human Resources. *Soul of discretion, not easily rattled*. That's quite a write-up. Not that I necessarily believe what I'm told around here."

"They're very kind," he replies.

"And you're grounded. Confined to barracks. Out to grass. Your wife's health has kept you back, is that correct, please?"

"But only as of the last few years, Minister"—less than grateful for *out to grass*—"and for the moment I'm quite at liberty to travel, I'm happy to say."

"And your present job is—? Remind me, please."

He is about to do so, emphasizing his many indispensable responsibilities, but the minister impatiently cuts him short:

"All right. Here's my question. Have you had any direct experience of secret intelligence work? You *personally*," he warns, as if there is another you who is less personal.

"Direct in what sense would that be, Minister?"

"Cloak-and-dagger stuff, what d'you think?"

"Only as a consumer, alas. An occasional one. Of the product. Not of the means of obtaining it, if that's your question, Minister."

"Not even when you were kicking around in those foreign parts that nobody has had the grace to itemize for me?"

"Alas, one's overseas postings tended to be largely economic, commercial, or consular," he explains, resorting to the linguistic archaisms he affects whenever he feels threatened. "Obviously, from time to time, one had access to the odd secret report—none of it high-level, I hasten to say. That, I'm afraid, is the long and short of it."

But the minister appears momentarily encouraged by this lack of conspiratorial experience, for a smile of something like complacency flits across his broad features.

"But you're a safe pair of hands, right? Untried maybe, but safe, for all that."

"Well, one likes to think so"—diffidently.

"CT ever come your way?"

"I'm sorry?"

"Counterterrorism, man! Has it come your way or not?"—spoken as to an idiot.

"I fear not, Minister."

"But you *care*? Yes?"

"About what exactly, Minister?"—as helpfully as he may.

"The well-being of our nation, for Christ's sake! The safety of our people, wheresoever they may be. Our core values in times of adversity. All right, our *heritage*, if you like"—using the word like an anti-Tory swipe. "You're not some limp-wristed closet liberal harboring secret thoughts about terrorists' right to blow the fucking world to pieces, for example."

"No, Minister, I think I may safely say I am not," he mumbles.

But the minister, far from sharing his embarrassment, compounds it:

"So then. If I were to tell you that the extremely delicate assignment I have in mind for you involves depriving the terrorist enemy of the means to launch a premeditated assault on our homeland, you would *not* immediately walk away, I take it?"

"To the contrary. I should be—well—"

"You should be *what*?"

"Gratified. Privileged. Proud, in fact. But somewhat surprised, obviously."

"Surprised by *what*, pray?"—like a man insulted.

"Well, not mine to inquire, Minister, but why me? I'm sure the Office has its fair share of people with the type of experience you're looking for."

Fergus Quinn, man of the people, swings away to the bay window and, with his chin thrust aggressively forward over his evening tie, and the tie's fixing awkwardly protruding from the cushions of flesh at the back of his neck, contemplates the golden gravel of Horse Guards Parade in the evening sunlight.

"If I were *further* to tell you that for the remainder of your natural life you will *not* by word or deed or any other means reveal the fact that a certain counterterror operation was so much as *considered*, let alone executed"—casting round indignantly for a way out of the verbal labyrinth he has talked himself into—"does that turn you *on* or *off*?"

"Minister, if you consider me the right man, I shall be happy to accept the assignment, whatever it may be. And you have my solemn assurance of permanent and absolute discretion," he insists, coloring up a bit in his irritation at having his loyalty hauled out and examined before his own eyes.

Shoulders hunched in the best Churchillian mode, Quinn remains framed at the bay window, as if waiting impatiently for the photographers to finish their work.

"There are certain *bridges* that have to be negotiated," he announces severely to his own reflection. "There's a certain *green light* that has to be given by some fairly crucial people up and down

the road there"—butting his bullish head in the direction of Downing Street. "When we get it—if we do and not until—you'll be informed. Thereafter, and for such time as I deem appropriate, you will be my eyes and ears on the ground. No sweetening the pill, you understand? None of your Foreign Office obfuscation or persiflage. Not on my watch, thank you. You'll give it me *straight*, exactly the way you see it. The cool view, through the eyes of the old pro. Are you hearing me?"

"Perfectly, Minister. I hear you and I understand exactly what you are saying"—his own voice, speaking to him from a distant cloud.

"Have you got any *Pauls* in your family?"

"I'm sorry, Minister?"

"Jesus Christ! It's a simple enough question, isn't it? Is any man in your family named *Paul*? Yes or no. Brother, father, what do I know?"

"None. Not a Paul in sight, I'm afraid."

"And no *Paulines*? The female version. *Paulette*, or whatever?"

"Definitely none."

"How about *Anderson*? No Andersons around at all? Maiden name, *Anderson*?"

"Again, not to my knowledge, Minister."

"And you're in reasonable nick. Physically. A stiff walk over rugged terrain isn't going to cause you to go faint at the knees in the manner that certain others around here might be afflicted?"

"I walk energetically. And I'm a keen gardener"—from the same distant cloud.

"Wait for a call from a man named Elliot. Elliot will be your first indication."

"And would Elliot be his surname or given name, I wonder?" he hears himself inquire soothingly, as if of a maniac.

"How the fuck should I know? He's operating in total secrecy under the aegis of an organization best known as Ethical Outcomes. New boys on the block, and up there with the best in the field, I'm assured on expert advice."

"Forgive me, Minister. What field would that be, exactly?"

"Private defense contractors. Where've you been? Name of the game these days. War's gone corporate, in case you haven't noticed. Standing professional armies are a bust. Top-heavy, under-equipped, one brigadier for every dozen boots on the ground, and cost a mint. Try a couple of years at Defence if you don't believe me."

"Oh I do, Minister"—startled by this wholesale dismissal of British arms, but anxious to humor the man nonetheless.

"You're trying to flog your house. Right? Harrow or somewhere."

"Harrow is correct"—now past surprise—"North Harrow."

"Cash problems?"

"Oh no, far from it, I'm thankful to say!" he exclaims, grateful to be returned if only momentarily to earth. "I have a little bit of my own, and my wife has come into a modest inheritance which includes a country property. We plan to sell our present house while the market holds, and live small until we make the move."

"Elliot will say he wants to buy your house in Harrow. He won't say he's from Ethical or anywhere else. He's seen the ads in the estate agent's window or wherever, looked it over from the outside, likes it, but there are issues he needs to discuss. He'll suggest a place and time to meet. You're to go along with whatever he proposes. That's the way these people work. Any further questions?"

Has he asked any?

"Meantime, you play totally normal man. Not a word to anyone. Not here in the Office, not at home. Is that clearly understood?"

Not understood. Not from Adam. But a wholehearted, mystified "yes" to all of it, and no very clear memory of how he got home that night, after a restorative Friday-evening visit to his Pall Mall club.

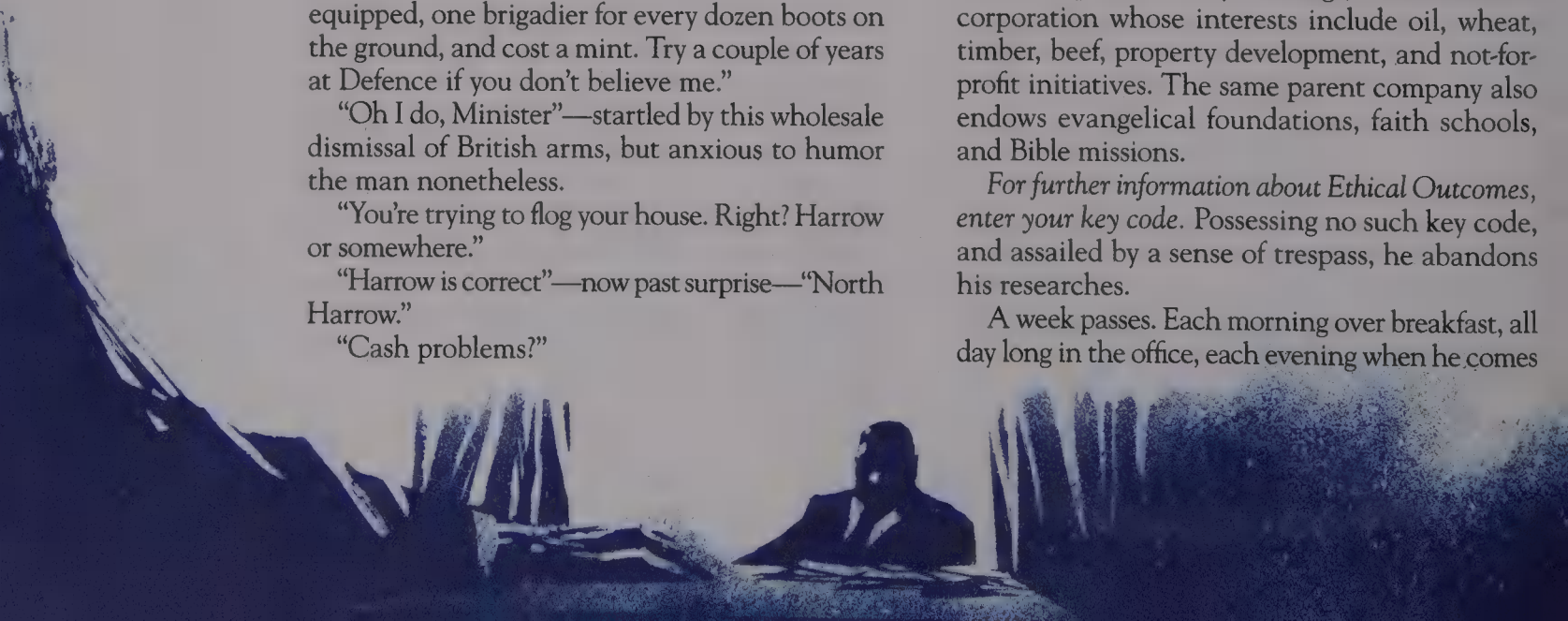
Bowed over his computer while wife and daughter chatter merrily in the next room, Paul Anderson—elect searches for Ethical Outcomes. Do you mean *Ethical Outcomes Incorporated of Houston, Texas*? For want of other information, yes, he does.

With our brand-new international team of uniquely qualified geopolitical thinkers, we at Ethical offer innovative, insightful, cutting-edge analyses of risk assessment to major corporate and national entities. At Ethical we pride ourselves on our integrity, due diligence, and up-to-the-minute cyber skills. Close protection and hostage negotiators available at immediate notice. Marlon will respond to your personal and confidential inquiries.

Email address and box number also in Houston, Texas. Toll-free phone number for your personal and confidential inquiries of Marlon. No names of directors, officers, advisers, or uniquely qualified geopolitical thinkers. No Elliot, first name or surname. The parent company of Ethical Outcomes is Spencer Hardy Holdings, a multinational corporation whose interests include oil, wheat, timber, beef, property development, and not-for-profit initiatives. The same parent company also endows evangelical foundations, faith schools, and Bible missions.

For further information about *Ethical Outcomes*, enter your key code. Possessing no such key code, and assailed by a sense of trespass, he abandons his researches.

A week passes. Each morning over breakfast, all day long in the office, each evening when he comes



home from work, he plays Totally Normal Man as instructed, and waits for the great call that may or may not come, or come when it's least expected: which is what it does early one morning while his wife is sleeping off her medication and he's pottering in the kitchen in his check shirt and corduroys washing up last night's supper things and telling himself he really must get a hold of that back lawn. The phone rings, he picks it up, gives a cheery "Good morning," and it's Elliot, who, sure enough, has seen the ads in the estate agent's window and is seriously interested in buying the house.

Except that his name isn't Elliot but Elliot, thanks to the South African accent.

Is Elliot one of Ethical Outcomes' brand-new international team of uniquely qualified geopolitical thinkers? It's possible, though not apparent. In the bare office in a poky side street off Paddington Street Gardens where the two men sit a mere ninety minutes later, Elliot wears a sober Sunday suit and a striped tie with baby parachutes on it. Cabalistic rings adorn the three fattest fingers of his manicured left hand. He has a shiny cranium, is olive-skinned, pockmarked, and disturbingly muscular. His gaze, now quizzing his guest in flirtatious flicks, now slipping sideways at the grimy walls, is colorless. His spoken English is so elaborate you'd think it was being marked for accuracy and pronunciation.

Extracting a nearly new British passport from a drawer, Elliot licks his thumb and flips officiously through its pages.

"Manila, Singapore, Dubai: these are but a few of the fine cities where you have attended statisticians' conferences. Do you understand that, Paul?"

Paul understands that.

"Should a nosy individual sitting next to you on the plane inquire what takes you to Gibraltar, you tell them it's yet another statisticians' conference. After that you tell them to mind their fucking business. Gibraltar does a strong line in Internet gambling, not all of it kosher. The gambling bosses don't like their little people talking out of turn. I must now ask you, Paul, very frankly, please, do you have any concerns whatever regarding your personal cover?"

"Well, maybe just the one concern actually, Elliot, yes, I do," he admits, after due consideration.

"Name it, Paul. Feel free."

"It's just that being a Brit—and a foreign servant who's been around the halls a bit—entering a prime British territory as a different Brit—well, it's a bit"—hunting for a word—"a bit bloody iffy, frankly."

Elliot's small, circular eyes return to him, staring but not blinking.

"I mean, couldn't I just go as myself and take my chances? We both know I'm going to have to

lie low. But *should* it happen that, *contrary* to our best calculations, I *do* bump into someone I know, or someone who knows me, more to the point, then at least I can be who I am. Me, I mean. Instead of—"

"Instead of what exactly, Paul?"

"Well, instead of pretending to be some phony statistician called Paul Anderson. I mean, who's ever going to believe a cock-and-bull story like that, if they know perfectly well who I am? I mean, honestly, Elliot"—feeling the heat coming into his face and not able to stop it—"Her Majesty's Government has got a bloody great tri-Services headquarters in Gibraltar. Not to mention a substantial Foreign Office presence and a king-sized listening station. And a Special Forces training camp. It only takes one chap we haven't thought of to jump out of the woodwork and embrace me as a long-lost chum and I'm—well, scuppered. And what do I know about statistics, come to that? Bugger all. Don't mean to question your expertise, Elliot. And of course I'll do whatever it takes. Just asking."

"Is that the complete sum of your anxieties, Paul?" Elliot inquires solicitously.

"Of course. Absolutely. Just making the point." And wishing he hadn't, but how the hell d'you throw logic out of the window?

Elliot moistens his lips, frowns, and in carefully fractured English replies as follows:

"It is a fact, Paul, that nobody in Gibraltar will give a five-dollar fuck who you are for as long as you flash your British passport at them and keep your head below the horizon at all times. However: it's your balls that will be in the direct line of fire, should we strike worst-case scenario, which it is my bounden duty to consider. Let us take the hypothetical case of the operation aborting in a manner not foreseen by its expert planners, of whom I pride myself as being one. Was there an inside man? they may ask. And who is this scholarly wanker Anderson who skulked in his hotel room reading books all day and all night?—they will start to wonder. Where is this Anderson to be found, in a colony no bigger than a fucking golf course? If that situation were to arise, I suspect you'd be grateful indeed not to have been the person you are in reality. Happy now, Paul?"

Happy as a sandboy, Elliot. Couldn't be happier. Totally out of my element, whole thing like a dream, but with you all the way. But then, noticing that Elliot looks a bit put out, and fearing that the detailed briefing he is about to receive will kick off on a bad note, he goes for a bit of bonding:

"So where does a highly qualified chap like you fit into the scheme of things, if I may ask without being intrusive, Elliot?"

Elliot's voice acquires the sanctimoniousness of the pulpit:

"I sincerely thank you for that question, Paul. I am a man of arms; it is my life. I have fought wars large and small, mostly on the continent of Africa. During these exploits I was fortunate enough to encounter a man whose sources of intelligence are legendary, not to say uncanny. His worldwide contacts speak to him as to no other in the safe knowledge that he will use their information in the furtherance of democratic principles and liberty. *Operation Wildlife*, the details of which I shall now unveil to you, is his personal brainchild."

And it is Elliot's proud statement that elicits the obvious, if sycophantic, question:

"And may one ask, Elliot, whether this great man has a name?"

"Paul, you are now and forevermore family. I will therefore tell you without restraint that the founder and driving force of Ethical Outcomes is a gentleman whose name, in strictest confidence, is Mr. Jay Crispin."

Return to Harrow by black cab.

Elliot says, *From now on keep all receipts*. Pay off cabbie, keep receipt.

Google Jay Crispin.

Jay is nineteen and lives in Paignton, Devon. She is a waitress.

J. Crispin, Veneer Makers, began life in Shoreditch in 1900.

Jay Crispin auditions for models, actors, musicians, and dancers.

But of Jay Crispin, the driving force of Ethical Outcomes and mastermind of *Operation Wildlife*, not a glimpse.

Stuck once more at the overlarge window of his hotel prison, the man who must call himself Paul emitted a weary string of mindless obscenities, more in the modern way than his own. *Fuck*—then *double fuck*. Then more *fucks*, loosed off in a bored patter of gunfire aimed at the cell phone on the bed and ending with an appeal—*Ring, you little bugger, ring*—only to discover that somewhere inside or outside his head the same cell phone, no longer mute, was chirruping back at him with its infuriating *diddly-ah, diddly-ah, diddly-ah dee-dah-doh*.

He remained at the window, frozen in disbelief. It's next door's fat Greek with a beard, singing in the shower. It's those horny lovers upstairs: he's grunting, she's howling, I'm hallucinating.

Then all he wanted in the world was to go to sleep and wake up when it was over. But by then he was at the bed, clutching the encrypted cell phone to his ear but, out of some aberrant sense of security, not speaking.

"Paul? Are you there, Paul? It's me. Kirsty, remember?"

Kirsty the part-time minder he'd never set eyes on. Her voice the only thing he knew about her: pert, imperious, and the rest of her imagined. Sometimes he wondered whether he detected a smothered Australian accent—a pair to Elliot's South African. And sometimes he wondered what kind of body the voice might have, and at others whether it had a body at all.

Already he could catch its sharpened tone, its air of portent:

"You still okay up there, Paul?"

"Very much so, Kirsty. You, too, I trust?"

"Ready for some night birding, owls a speciality?"

It was part of Paul Anderson's fatuous cover that his hobby was ornithology.

"Then here's the update. It's all systems go. Tonight. The *Rosemaria* left harbor bound for Gib five hours ago. *Aladdin* has booked his onboard guests into the Chinese on the Queensway Marina for a big lash-up tonight. He's going to settle his guests in, then slide off on his own. His tryst with *Punter* confirmed for 2330. How's about I pick you up from your hotel at 2100 hours cold? That's 9 P.M. on the dot. Yes?"

"When do I join up with Jeb?"

"As soon as may be, Paul," she retorted, with the extra edge in her voice for whenever the name Jeb was mentioned between them. "It's all arranged. Your friend Jeb will be waiting. You dress for the birds. You do *not* check out. Agreed?"

It had been agreed all of two days ago.

"You bring your passport and your wallet. You pack up your possessions nicely, but you leave them in your room. You hand your room key in at the desk like you're going to be back late. Want to stand on the hotel steps so's you don't have to hang around the lobby and get stared at by the tour groups?"

"Fine. I'll do that. Good idea."

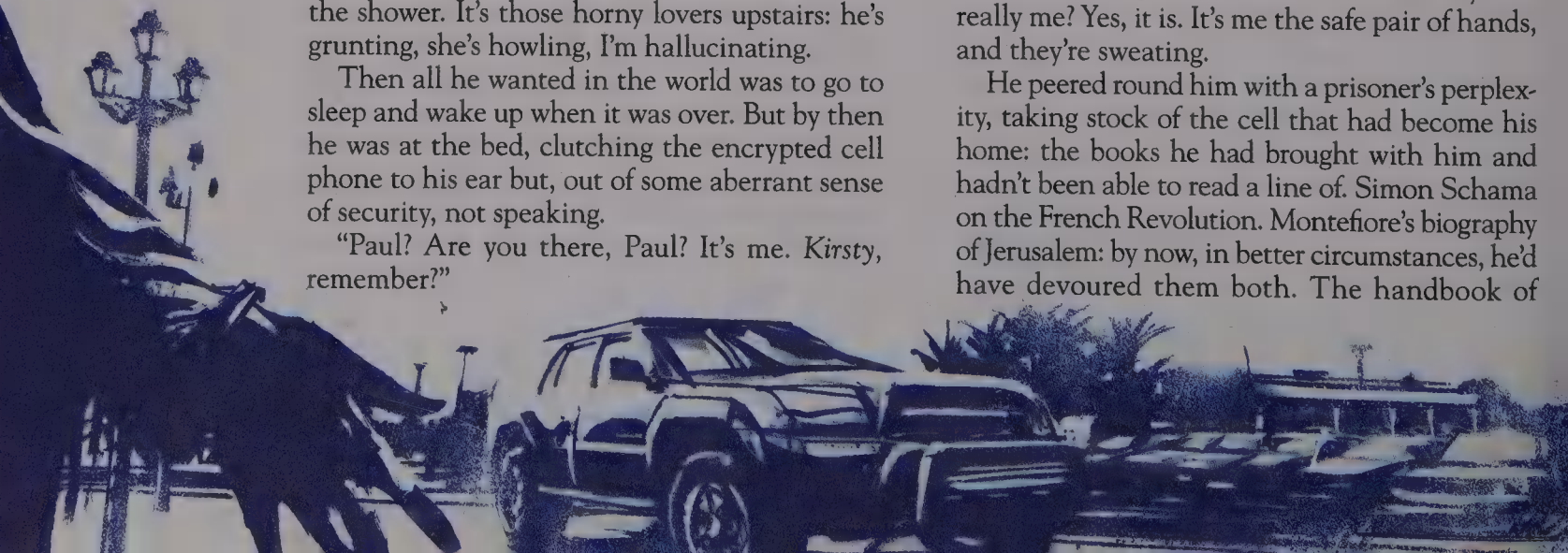
They'd agreed on that, too.

"Look out for a blue Toyota four-by-four, shiny, new. Red sign on the passenger-side windscreen saying CONFERENCE."

For the third time since he had arrived, she insisted they compare watches, which he considered a needless excursion in these days of quartz, until he realized he'd been doing the same thing with the bedside clock. One hour and fifty-two minutes to go.

She had rung off. He was back in solitary. Is it really me? Yes, it is. It's me the safe pair of hands, and they're sweating.

He peered round him with a prisoner's perplexity, taking stock of the cell that had become his home: the books he had brought with him and hadn't been able to read a line of. Simon Schama on the French Revolution. Montefiore's biography of Jerusalem: by now, in better circumstances, he'd have devoured them both. The handbook of



Mediterranean birds they'd forced on him. His eye drifted to his arch-enemy: the Chair That Smelt Of Piss. He'd sat half of last night in it after the bed had ejected him. Sit in it one more time? Treat himself to another watch of *The Dam Busters*? Or might Laurence Olivier's *Henry V* do a better job of persuading the God of Battles to steel his soldier's heart? Or how about another spot of Vatican-censored soft porn to get the old juices flowing?

Yanking open the rickety wardrobe, he fished out Paul Anderson's green wheelie bag plastered with travel labels and set to work packing into it the junk that made up an itinerant bird-watching statistician's fictional identity. Then he sat on the bed watching the encrypted phone recharge, because he had an unappeasable fear it would run out on him at the crucial moment.

In the lift a middle-aged couple in green blazers asked him if he came from Liverpool. Alas, he didn't. Then was he one of the group? Afraid not: what group would that be? But by then his posh voice and eccentric outdoor gear were enough for them and they left him to himself.

Arriving at the ground floor, he stepped into a seething, howling hubbub of humanity. Amid festoons of green ribbon and balloons, a flashing sign proclaimed St. Patrick's Day. An accordion was screeching out Irish folk music. Burly men and women in green Guinness bonnets were dancing. A drunken woman with her bonnet askew seized his head, kissed him on the lips, and told him he was her lovely boy.

Jostling and apologizing, he fought his way to the hotel steps, where a cluster of guests stood waiting for their cars. He took a deep breath and caught the scents of bay and honey mingled with the oil fumes. Above him, the shrouded stars of a Mediterranean night. He was dressed as he'd been told to dress: stout boots, and don't forget your anorak, Paul, the Med at night gets nippy. And zipped over his heart in the anorak's inside pocket, his super-encrypted cell phone. He could feel its weight on his left nipple—which didn't prevent his fingers from making their own furtive exploration.

A shiny Toyota four-by-four had joined the queue of arriving cars, and yes it was blue and yes there was a red sign saying CONFERENCE on the passenger side of the windscreen. Two white faces up front, the driver male, bespectacled, and young. The girl compact and efficient, leaping out like a yachtswoman, hauling back the side door.

"You're Arthur, right?" she yelled in best Australian.

"No, I'm Paul, actually."

"Oh right, you're Paul! Sorry about that. Arthur's next stop. I'm Kirsty. Great to meet you, Paul. Hop right in!"

Agreed safety formula. Typical overproduction, but never mind. He hopped, and was alone on the rear seat. The side door slammed shut and the four-by-four nosed its way between the white gateposts, on to the cobbled road.

"And this here's Hansi," Kirsty said over the back of her seat. "Hansi's part of the team. 'Ever watchful'—right, Hansi? That's his motto. Want to say hullo to the gentleman, Hansi?"

"Welcome aboard, Paul," said Ever-Watchful Hansi, without turning his head. Could be an American voice, could be German. War's gone corporate.

They were driving between high stone walls and he was drinking in every sight and sound at once: the blare of jazz from a passing bar, the obese English couples quaffing tax-free booze at their outdoor tables, the tattoo parlor with its embroidered torso in low-slung jeans, the barber's shop with 1960s hairstyles, the bowed old man in a yarmulke wheeling a baby's pram, and the curio shop selling statuettes of greyhounds, flamenco dancers, and Jesus and his disciples.

Kirsty had turned to examine him by the passing lights. Her bony face, freckled from the outback. Short dark hair tucked into the bush hat. No makeup, and nothing behind the eyes: or nothing for him. The jaw crammed into the crook of her forearm while she gave him the once-over. The body indecipherable under the bulk of a quilted bush jacket.

"Left everything in your room, Paul? Like we told you?"

"All packed up, as you said."

"Including the bird book?"

"Including it."

Into a dark side street, washing slung across it. Decrepit shutters, crumbling plaster, graffiti demanding BRITS GO HOME! Back into the blaze of city lights.

"And you didn't check out of your room? By mistake or something."

"The lobby was chockablock. I couldn't have checked out if I'd tried."

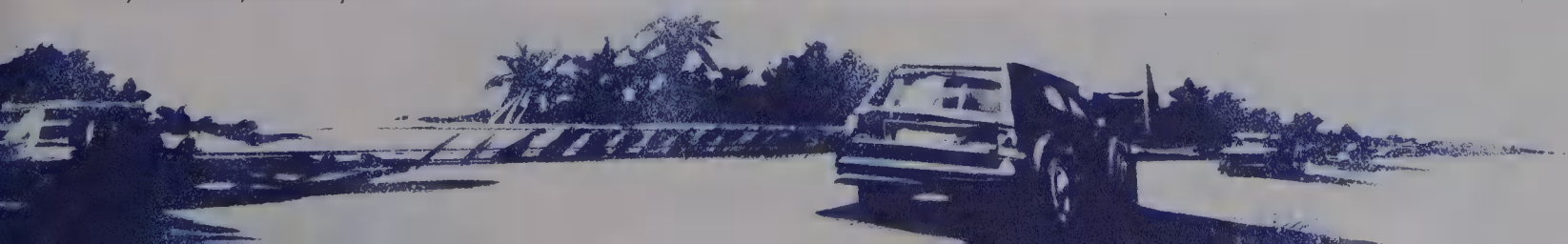
"How about the room key?"

In my bloody pocket. Feeling an idiot, he dropped it into her waiting hand and watched her pass it to Hansi.

"We're doing the tour, right? Elliot says to show you the facts on the ground, so's you have the visual image."

"Fine."

"We're heading for Upper Rock, so we're taking in the Queensway Marina on the way. That's the *Rosemaria* out there now. She arrived an hour ago. See it?"



"See it."

"That's where *Aladdin* always anchors, and those are his personal steps to the dockside. Nobody's allowed to use them except him: he has property interests in the colony. He's still aboard, and his guests are running late, still powdering their noses before they go ashore for their slap-up dinner at the Chinese. Everybody eyeballs the *Rosemaria*, so you can, too. Just keep it relaxed. There's no law says you can't take a relaxed look at a thirty-million-dollar super-yacht."

Was it the excitement of the chase? Or just the relief of being got out of prison? Or was it the simple prospect of serving his country in a way he'd never dreamed of? Whatever it was, a wave of patriotic fervor swept over him as centuries of British imperial conquest received him. The statues to great admirals and generals, the cannons, redoubts, bastions, the bruised air-raid precaution signs directing our stoical defenders to their nearest shelter, the Gurkha-style warriors standing guard with fixed bayonets outside the Governor's residence, the bobbies in their baggy British uniforms: he was heir to all of it. Even the dismal rows of fish-and-chip shops built into elegant Spanish façades were like a homecoming.

A flash-glimpse of cannons, then of war memorials, one British, one American. Welcome to Ocean Village, hellish canyon of apartment blocks with balconies of blue glass for ocean waves. Enter a private road with gates and a guard-box, no sign of a guard. Below, a forest of white masts, a ceremonial, carpeted landing bay, a row of boutiques, and the Chinese restaurant where *Aladdin* has booked his slap-up dinner.

And out to sea in all her splendor, the *Rosemaria*, lit overall with fairy lights. The windows on her middle deck blacked out. The salon windows translucent. Burly men hovering among the empty tables. Alongside her, at the foot of a gold-plated ship's ladder, a sleek motorboat with two crew in white uniforms waiting to ferry *Aladdin* and his guests ashore.

"*Aladdin* is basically a mixed-race Pole who has taken out Lebanese citizenship," Elliot is explaining, in the little room in Paddington. "*Aladdin* is the Pole I personally would not touch with a barge, to coin a witticism. *Aladdin* is the most unprincipled fucking merchant of death on the face of this earth bar none, plus also the chosen intimate of the worst dregs of international society. The principal item on his list will be Manpads, I am given to understand."

Manpads, Elliot?

"Twenty of them at last count. State of the art, very durable, very deadly."

Allow time for Elliot's bald, superior smile and sloppy glance.

"A Manpad, technically, is your man-portable air-defense system, Paul, *Manpad* being what I call an acronym. As a weapon known by the same acronym, your Manpad is so lightweight that a kid can handle one. It also happens to be just the item if you are contemplating bringing down an unarmed airliner. Such is the mentality of these murderous shits."

"But will *Aladdin* have them with him, Elliot, the Manpads? Now? On the night? On board the *Rosemaria*?" he asks, playing the innocent because that's what Elliot seems to like best.

"According to our leader's reliable and exclusive intelligence sources, the Manpads in question are part of a somewhat larger inventory of sale comprising top-of-the-range anti-tanks, rocket-propelleds, and best-brand assault rifles from state arsenals around the known bad world. As in the famous Arabian fairy tale, *Aladdin* has stashed his treasure in the desert, hence the choice of name. He will notify the successful bidder of its whereabouts *when*—and *only* when—he has cut the deal, in this case with none other than *Punter* himself. Ask me what is the purpose of the meeting between *Aladdin* and *Punter*, and I will reply that it is in order to set the parameters of the deal, the terms of payment in gold, and the eventual inspection of goods prior to handover."

The Toyota had left the marina and was negotiating a grass roundabout of palm trees and pansies.

"Boys and girls neat and tidy, everyone in place," Kirsty was reporting in a monotone over her cell phone.

Boys, girls? Where? What have I missed? He must have asked her:

"Two parties of four watchers sitting in the Chinese, waiting for the *Aladdin* party to show up. Two walk-by couples. One tame taxi and two motorcyclists for when he sneaks away from the party," she recited, as to a child who hasn't been paying attention.

They shared a strained silence. She thinks I'm surplus to requirements. She thinks I'm the Limey know-nothing striped-pants parachuted in to make difficulties.

"So when do I get to meet up with Jeb?" he insisted, not for the first time.

"Your friend Jeb will be ready and waiting for you at the rendezvous as per schedule, like I told you."

"He's why I'm here," he said too loud, feeling his gall rising. "Jeb and his men can't go in without my say-so. That was the understanding from the start."

"We're aware of that, thank you, Paul, and Elliot's aware of it. The sooner you and your friend Jeb hook up and the two teams are talking, the



sooner we can get this thing squared away and go home. Okay?"

He needed Jeb. He needed his own.

The traffic had gone. The trees were shorter here, the sky bigger. He counted off the landmarks. St. Bernard's Church. The Mosque of Ibrahim-al-Ibrahim, its minaret lit white. The shrine to Our Lady of Europe. Each of them branded on his memory thanks to mindless leafings through the greasy hotel guidebook. Out to sea, an armada of lighted freighters at anchor. *The seaborne boys will operate out of Ethical's mother ship*, Elliot is saying.

The sky had vanished. This tunnel is not a tunnel. It's a disused mine shaft. It's an air-raid shelter. Crooked girders, sloppy walls of breeze block and rough-cut cliff. Neon strips flying overhead, white road markings keeping pace with them. Festoons of black wiring. A sign saying LOOK OUT FOR FALLING STONES! Potholes, rivulets of brown floodwater, an iron doorway leading to God knew where. Has *Punter* passed this way today? Is he hovering behind a doorway with one of his twenty Manpads? *Punter's not just high value, Paul. In the words of Mr. Jay Crispin, Punter is stratospheric*: Elliot again.

Pillars like the gateway to another world coming at them as they emerge from the belly of the Rock and land on a road cut into the cliff. A hefty wind is rattling the coachwork, a half-moon has appeared at the top of the windscreen, and the Toyota is bumping along the nearside verge. Beneath them, lights of coastal settlements. Beyond them, the pitch-black mountains of Spain. And out to sea, the same motionless armada of freight ships.

"Sides only," Kirsty ordered.

Hansi doused the headlights.

"Cut the engine."

To the furtive mutter of wheels on crumbling tarmac, they rolled forward. Ahead of them, a red pin-light flashed twice, then a third time, closer at hand.

"Stop now."

They stopped. Kirsty slammed back the side door, letting in a blast of cold wind, and the steady din of engines from the sea. Across the valley, moonlit cloud was curling up the ravines and rolling like gun smoke along the Rock's ridge. A car sped out of the tunnel behind them and raked the hillside with its headlights, leaving a deeper darkness.

"Paul, your friend's here."

Seeing no friend, he slid across to the open door. In front of him, Kirsty was leaning forward, pulling the back of her seat after her as if she couldn't wait to let him out. He started to lower his feet to the ground and heard the scream of insomniac gulls and the zip-zip of crickets. Two gloved hands reached out of the darkness to steady him. Behind them hunched little Jeb with his paint-dappled face glistening inside his

pushed-back balaclava, and a lamp like a cyclopic eye stuck to his forehead.

"Good to see you again, Paul. Try these for size, then," he murmured in his gentle Welsh lilt.

"And jolly good to see you, Jeb, I must say," he answered fervently, accepting the goggles and grasping Jeb's hand in return. It was the Jeb he remembered: compact, calm, nobody's man but his own.

"Hotel okay then, Paul?"

"The absolute bloody pits. How's yours?"

"Come and have a see, man. All mod cons. Tread where I tread. Slow and easy. And if you see a falling stone, be sure and duck, now."

Was that a joke? He grinned anyway. The Toyota was driving down the hill, job done and goodnight. He put on the goggles and the world turned green. Raindrops, driven on the wind, smashed themselves like insects in front of his eyes. Jeb was wading ahead of him up the hillside, the miner's torch on his forehead lighting the way. There was no track except where he trod. I'm on the grouse moor with my father, scrambling through gorse ten feet high, except that this hillside had no gorse, just stubborn tufts of sand grass that kept dragging at his ankles. Some men you lead, and some men you follow, his father, a retired general, used to say. Well, with Jeb, you follow.

The ground evened out. The wind eased and rose again, the ground with it. He heard the putter of a helicopter overhead. *Mr. Crispin will be providing the full American-style coverage*, Elliot had proclaimed, on a note of corporate pride. *Fuller than you will ever be required to know, Paul. Highly sophisticated equipment will be standard for all, plus a Predator drone for observation purposes is by no means beyond his operational budget.*

The climb steeper now, the earth part fallen rock, part windblown sand. Now his foot struck a bolt, a bit of steel rod, a sheet-anchor. Once—but Jeb's hand was waiting to point it out to him—a stretch of metal catch-net that he had to clamber over.

"You're doing fine, Paul. And the lizards don't bite you, not in Gib. They call them skinks here, don't ask me why. You're a family man, right?"—and getting a spontaneous "yes"—"Who've you got then, Paul? No disrespect."

"One wife, one daughter," he replied breathlessly. "Girl's a medical doctor"—thinking, oh Christ, forgot I was Paul and single, but what the hell—"How about you, Jeb?"

"One great wife, one boy, five years old next week. Crackerjack, same as yours, I expect."

A car emerged from the tunnel behind them. He made to drop into a crouch, but Jeb was holding him upright with a grip so tight he gasped.

"Nobody can spot us unless we move, see," he explained in his same comfortable Welsh undertone. "It's a hundred meters up and pretty steep



now, but not a bother for you, I'm sure. A bit of a traverse, then we're home. It's only the three boys and me"—as if there were nothing to be shy of.

And steep it was, with thickets and slipping sand, and another catch-net to negotiate, and Jeb's gloved hand waiting if he stumbled, but he didn't. Suddenly they had arrived. Three men in combat gear and headsets, one of them taller than the rest, were lounging on a tarpaulin, drinking from tin mugs and watching computer screens as if they were watching Saturday-afternoon football.

The hide was built into the steel frame of a catch-net. Its walls were of matted foliage and shrub. Even from a few feet away, and without Jeb to guide him, he might have walked clean past it. The computer screens were fixed at the end of pipe casings. You had to squint into the pipes to see them. A few misty stars glowed in the matted roof. A few strands of moonlight glinted on weaponry of a kind he'd never seen. Four packs of gear were lined up along one wall.

"So this is Paul, lads. Our man from the Ministry," said Jeb beneath the rattle of the wind.

One by one, each man turned, drew off a leather glove, shook his hand too hard, and introduced himself.

"Don. Welcome to the Ritz, Paul."

"Andy."

"Shorty. Hullo, Paul. Make the climb all right, then?"

Shorty because he's a foot taller than the rest of them: why else? Jeb handing him a mug of tea. Sweet with condensed milk. A lateral arrow-slit was fringed by foliage. The computer pipes were fixed below it, allowing a clear view down the hillside to the coastline and out to sea. To his left the same pitch-black hills of Spain, bigger now, and closer. Jeb lining him up to look at the left-hand screen. A rolling sequence of shots from hidden cameras: the marina, the Chinese restaurant, the fairy-lit *Rosemaria*. Switch to a shaky hand-held shot inside the Chinese restaurant. The camera at floor level. From the end of a long table in the window bay, an imperious fifty-year-old fat man in a nautical blazer and perfect hair gesticulates to his fellow diners. On his right, a sulky brunette half his age. Bare shoulders, showy breasts, diamond collar, and a downturned mouth.

"Aladdin's a twitchy bugger, Paul," Shorty was confiding. "First he has a run-in with the headwaiter in English because there isn't any lobster. Now his lady friend's getting it in Arabic, and him a Pole. I'm surprised he doesn't give her a thick ear, the way she's carrying on. It's like at home, right, Jeb?"

"Come over here a minute, Paul, please."

With Jeb's hand on his shoulder to guide him, he made a wide step to the middle screen. Alter-

nating aerial and ground shots. Were they courtesy of the Predator drone that was by no means beyond Mr. Crispin's operational budget? Or of the helicopter that he could hear idling overhead? A terrace of white houses, faced with weatherboarding, perched on the cliff's edge. Stone staircases to the beach dividing them. The staircases leading down to a skimpy crescent of sand. A rock beach enclosed by jagged cliff. Orange street lamps. A metalead slip road leading from the terrace to the main coast road. No lights in the windows of the houses. No curtains.

And through the arrow-slit, the same terrace in plain sight.

"It's a tear-down, see, Paul," Jeb was explaining in his ear. "A Kuwaiti company's going to put up a casino complex and a mosque. That's why the houses are empty. *Aladdin*, he's a director of the Kuwaiti company. Well now, according to what he's been telling his guests, he's got a confidential meeting with the developer tonight. Very lucrative, it will be. Shaving off the profits for themselves, according to his lady friend. You wouldn't think a man like *Aladdin* would be so leaky, like, but he is." "Showing off," Shorty explained. "Typical fucking Pole."

"Is Punter already inside the house then?" he asked.

"Let's say, if he is, we haven't spotted him, Paul, put it that way," Jeb replied in the same steady, deliberately conversational tone. "Not from the outside, and there's no coverage inside. There hasn't been the opportunity, so we're told. Well, you can't bug twenty houses all in one go, I don't suppose, can you, not even with today's equipment? Maybe he's lying up in one house and sneaking into another for his meeting. We don't know, do we, not yet? It's wait and see and don't go down there till you know who you're taking on, 'specially if you're looking for an al-Qaeda kingpin."

Memories of Elliot's clotted description of the same elusive figure come sweeping back to him:

I would basically describe Punter as your jihadist Pimpernel par excellence, Paul, not to say your will-o'-the-wisp. He eschews all means of electronic communication, including cell phones and harmless-seeming emails. It's word of mouth only for Punter, and one courier at a time, never the same one twice.

"He could come at us from anywhere, Paul," Shorty was explaining, perhaps to wind him up. "Over the mountains there. Up the Spanish coast by small boat. Or he could walk on the water if he felt like it. Right, Jeb?"

Cursory nod from Jeb. Jeb and Shorty, the tallest and the shortest men in the team: an attraction of opposites.

"Or smuggle himself across from Morocco under the noses of the coastguards, right, Jeb? Or put on



an Armani suit, and fly in Club on a Swiss passport. Or charter a private Lear, which is what I'd do, frankly. Having first ordered my special menu in advance from the highly attractive hostess in a miniskirt. Money to burn, *Punter's* got, according to our amazing top-of-the-range source, right, Jeb?"

From the seaward side, the pitch-dark terrace was forbidding against the night sky, the beach a blackened no-man's-land of craggy boulders and seething surf.

"How many men in the boat team?" he asked. "Elliot didn't seem sure."

"We got him down to eight," Shorty replied, over Jeb's shoulder. "Nine when they head back to the mother ship with *Punter*. They hope," he added drily.

The conspirators will be unarmed, Paul, Elliot was saying. Such is the degree of trust between a pair of total bastards. No guns, no bodyguards. We tiptoe in, we grab our man, we tiptoe out, we were never there. Jeb's boys push from the land, Ethical pulls from the sea.

Side by side with Jeb once more, he peered through the arrow-slit at the lighted freighters, then at the middle screen. One freighter lay apart from her companions. A Panamanian flag flapped from her stern. On her deck, shadows flitted among the derricks. An inflatable dinghy dangled over the water, two men aboard. He was still watching them when his encrypted cell phone began cooing its stupid melody. Jeb grabbed it from him, doused the sound, handed it back.

"That you, Paul?"

"Paul speaking."

"This is Nine. All right? Nine. Tell me you hear me."

And I shall be Nine, the minister is solemnly intoning, like a Biblical prophet. I shall not be Alpha, which is reserved for our target building. I shall not be Bravo, which is reserved for our location. I shall be Nine, which is the designated code for your commander, and I shall be communicating with you by specially encrypted cell phone ingeniously linked to your operational team by way of an augmented PRR net, which for your further information stands for Personal Role Radio.

"I hear you loud and clear, Nine, thank you."

"And you're in position? Yes? Keep your answers short from now on."

"I am indeed. Your eyes and ears."

"All right. Tell me precisely what you can see from where you are."

"We're looking straight down the slope to the houses. Couldn't be better."

"Who's there?"

"Jeb, his three men, and myself."

Pause. Muffled male voice off.

The minister again:

"Has anyone any idea why *Aladdin* hasn't left the Chinese yet?"

"They started eating late. He's expected to leave any minute. That's all we've heard."

"And no *Punter* in sight? You're absolutely sure of that? Yes?"

"Not in sight as yet. I'm sure. Yes."

"The slightest visual indication, however remote—the smallest clue—possibility of a sighting—"

Pause. Is the augmented PRR breaking up, or is Quinn?

"—I expect you to advise me *immediately*. Understood? We see everything you see, but not so clearly. You have *eyes-on*. Yes?"—already sick of the delay—"Plain sight, for *fuck's* sake!"

"Yes, indeed. Plain sight. *Eyes-on*. I have *eyes-on*."

Don has struck up his arm up for attention.

In the center of town a people carrier is nosing its way through night traffic. It has a taxi sign on its roof and a single passenger on the rear seat, and one glance is enough to tell him that the passenger is the corpulent, very animated *Aladdin*, the Pole that Elliot won't touch with a barge. He's holding a cell phone to his ear and, as in the Chinese restaurant, he is gesticulating with his free hand.

The pursuing camera veers, goes wild. The screen goes blank. The helicopter takes over, pinpoints the people carrier, puts a halo over it. The pursuing ground camera returns. The winking icon of a telephone, top-left corner of the screen. Jeb hands Paul an earpiece. One Polish man talking to another. They are taking it in turns to laugh. *Aladdin's* left hand is performing a puppet show in the rear window of the people carrier. Male Polish merrymaking is replaced by the disapproving voice of a woman translator:

"*Aladdin* is speaking to brother Josef in Warsaw," says the woman's voice disdainfully. "It is vulgar conversation. They are discussing girlfriend of *Aladdin*, this woman he has on boat. Her name is Imelda. *Aladdin* is tired of Imelda. Imelda has too much mouth. He will abandon her. Josef must visit Beirut. *Aladdin* will pay for him to come from Warsaw. If Josef will come to Beirut, *Aladdin* will introduce him to many women who will wish to sleep with him. Now *Aladdin* is on his way to visit special friend. Special *secret* friend. He love this friend very much. She will replace Imelda. She is not gloomy, not bitch, has very beautiful breasts. Maybe he will buy apartment for her in Gibraltar. This is good news for taxes. *Aladdin* will go now. His secret special friend is waiting. She desires him very much. When she opens the door she will be completely naked. *Aladdin* has ordered this. Goodnight, Josef."

A moment of collective bewilderment, broken by Don:

"He hasn't got fucking *time* to get laid," he whispered indignantly. "Not even him."

Echoed by Andy, equally indignant:

"His cab's turned the wrong way. What the fuck's it gone and done that for?"

"There is *always* time to get laid," Shorty corrected them firmly. "If Boris Becker can knock up a bird in a cupboard or whatever, *Aladdin* can get himself laid on his way to sell Manpads to his mate *Punter*. It's only logical."

This much at least was true: the people carrier, instead of turning right towards the tunnel, had turned left, back into the center of town.

"He knows we're on him," Andy muttered in despair. "Shit."

"Or changed his stupid mind"—Don.

"Hasn't got one, darling. He's a bungalow. It's all downstairs"—Shorty.

The screen turned gray, then white, then a funereal black.

CONTACT TEMPORARILY LOST

All eyes on Jeb as he murmured gentle Welsh cadences into his chest microphone:

"What have you done with him, Elliot? We thought *Aladdin* was too fat to lose."

Delay and static over Don's relay. Elliot's querulous South African voice, low and fast:

"There're a couple of apartment blocks with covered car parks down there. Our reading is, he drove into one and came out by a different one. We're searching."

"So he knows you're on him then"—Jeb—"That's not helpful, is it, Elliot?"

"Maybe he's aware, maybe it's habit. Kindly get off my bloody back. Right?"

"If we're compromised, we're going home, Elliot. We're not walking into a trap, not if people know we're coming. We've been there, thank you. We're too old for that one."

Static, but no answer. Jeb again:

"You didn't think to put a tracker on the cab by any chance, did you, Elliot? Maybe he switched vehicles. I've heard of that being done before, once or twice."

"Go fuck yourself."

Shorty in his role as Jeb's outraged comrade and defender, pulling off his mouthpiece:

"I'm definitely going to sort Elliot out when this is over," he announced to the world. "I'm going to have a nice, reasonable, quiet word with him, and I'm going to shove his stupid South African head up his arse, which is a fact. Aren't I, Jeb?"

"Maybe you are, Shorty," Jeb said quietly. "And maybe you're not, too. So shut up, d'you mind?"

The screen has come back to life. The night traffic is down to single cars, but no halo is hang-

ing over an errant people carrier. The encrypted cell phone is trembling again.

"Can you see something we can't, Paul?"—accusingly.

"I don't know what you can see, Nine. *Aladdin* was talking to his brother, then he changed direction. Everyone here is mystified."

"We are, too. You better bloody believe it."

We? You and who else, exactly? Eight? Ten? Who is it that whispers in your ear? Passes you little notes, for all I know, while you talk to me? Causes you to change tack and start again? Mr. Jay Crispin, our corporate warlord and intelligence provider?

"Paul?"

"Yes, Nine."

"You have eyes-on. Give me a reading, please. Now."

"The issue seems to be whether *Aladdin's* woken up to the fact that he's being followed." And after a moment's thought: "Also whether he's visiting a new girlfriend he has apparently installed here instead of keeping his date with *Punter*"—increasingly impressed by his own confidence.

Shuffle. Sounds off. The whisperer at work again. Disconnect.

"Paul?"

"Yes, Nine."

"Hang on. Wait. Got some people here need to talk to me."

Paul hangs on. People or person?

"Okay! Matter solved"—Minister Quinn in full voice now—"Aladdin's not—repeat *not*—about to screw anybody, man or woman. That's a fact. Is that clear?"—not waiting for an answer. "The phone call to his brother we just heard was a blind to firm up his date with *Punter* over the open line. The man on the other end was *not* his brother. He was *Punter's* intermediary." Hiatus for more offstage advice. "Okay, his *cut-out*. He was *Aladdin's cut-out*"—settling to the word.

Line dead again. For *more* advice? Or is the Personal Role Radio not quite as augmented as it was cracked up to be?

"Paul?"

"Nine?"

"Aladdin was merely telling *Punter* that he's on his way. Giving him a heads-up. We have that direct from source. Kindly pass to Jeb forthwith."

There was just time to pass to Jeb forthwith before Don's arm shot up again.

"Screen two, skipper. House seven. Seaward-side camera. Light in ground-floor window left."

"Over here, Paul"—Jeb.

Jeb has dropped into a squat at Don's side. Crouching behind them, he peers between their two heads, unable to make out at first which light he's supposed to be seeing. Lights were dancing in the ground-floor windows, but they were reflections



from the anchored fleet. Removing his goggles and stretching his eyes as wide as they'll go, he watches the replay of the ground-floor window of house number seven in close-up.

A spectral pin-light, pointed upward like a candle, moves across the room. It is held by a ghostly white forearm. The inland cameras take up the story. Yes, there's the light again. And the ghostly forearm is tinged orange by the sodium lamps along the slip road.

"He's inside there then, isn't he?"—Don, the first to speak. "House seven. Ground floor. Flashing a fucking torch because there's no electric." But he sounds oddly unconvinced.

"It's Ophelia"—Shorty, the scholar. "In her fucking nightshirt. Going to throw herself into the Med."

Jeb is standing as upright as the roof of the hide allows. He pulls back his balaclava, making a scarf of it. In the spectral green light, his paint-smeared face is suddenly a generation older.

"Yes, Elliot, we saw it, too. All right, agreed, a human presence. Whose presence, that's another question, I suppose."

Is the augmented sound system really on the blink? Over a single earpiece he hears Elliot's voice in belligerent mode:

"Jeb? Jeb, I need you. Are you there?"

"Listening, Elliot."

The South African accent very strong now, very didactic:

"My orders are, as of one minute ago, precisely, to place my team on red alert for immediate embarkation. I am further instructed to pull my surveillance resources out of the town center and concentrate them on *Alpha*. Approaches to *Alpha* will be covered by static vans. Your detachment will descend and deploy accordingly."

"Who says we will, Elliot?"

"That is the battle plan. Land and sea units converge. Jesus fuck, Jeb, have you forgotten your fucking orders?"

"You know very well what my orders are, Elliot. They're what they were from the start. Find, fix, and finish. We haven't found *Punter*, we've seen a light. We can't fix him till we've found him, and we've no PID worth a damn."

PID? Though he detests initials, enlightenment comes: Positive Identification.

"So there's no finishing and there's no convergence," Jeb is insisting to Elliot in the same steady tone. "Not till I agree, there isn't. We're not shooting at each other in the dark, thank you. Confirm you copy me, please. Elliot, did you hear what I just said?"

Still no answer, as Quinn returns in a flurry.

"Paul? That light inside house seven. You saw it? You had *eyes-on*?"

"I did, yes. *Eyes-on*."

"Once?"

"I believe I saw it twice, but indistinctly."

"It's *Punter*. *Punter*'s in there. At this minute. In house seven. That was *Punter* holding a hand torch, crossing the room. You saw his arm. Well, didn't you? You saw it, for Christ's sake. A human arm. We all did."

"We saw an arm, but the arm is subject to identification, Nine. We're still waiting for *Aladdin* to turn up. He's lost, and there's no indication that he's on his way here." And catching Jeb's eye: "We're also waiting for proof that *Punter* is on the premises."

"Paul?"

"Still here, Nine."

"We're re-planning. Your job is to keep the houses in plain sight. House seven particularly. That's an order. While we re-plan. Understood?"

"Understood."

"You see anything out of the ordinary with the naked eye that the cameras may have missed, I need to know instantly." Fades and returns. "You're doing an excellent job, Paul. It will not go unnoticed. Tell Jeb. That's an order."

They're becalmed, but he feels no calm. *Aladdin*'s vanishing act has cast its spell over the hide. Elliot may be repositioning his aerial cameras but they're still scanning the town, homing at random on stray cars and abandoning them. His ground cameras are still offering now the marina, now the entrance to the tunnel, now stretches of empty coast road.

"Come on, you ugly bastard, *show*"—Don, to the absent *Aladdin*.

"Too busy having it away, randy sod"—Andy, to himself.

Aladdin is waterproof, Paul, Elliot is insisting across his desk in Paddington. We do not lay one single finger on Aladdin. Aladdin is fireproof, he is bulletproof. That is the solemn deal that Mr. Crispin has cut with his highly valuable informant, and Mr. Crispin's word to an informant is sacred.

"Skipper"—Don again, this time with both arms up.

A motorcyclist is weaving his way along the metaled service track, flashing his headlight from side to side. No helmet, just a black-and-white keffiyeh flapping round his neck. With his right hand he is steering the bike, while his left holds what appears to be a bag by its throat. Swinging the bag as he goes along, displaying it, showing it off, look at me. Slender, wasp-waisted. The keffiyeh masking the lower part of his face. As he draws level with the center of the terrace his right hand leaves the handlebars and rises in a revolutionist's salute.

Reaching the end of the service track, he seems all set to join the coast road, heading south. Then



abruptly he turns north, head thrust forward over the handlebars, keffiyeh streaming behind him, and, accelerating, races towards the Spanish border.

But who cares about a hell-bent motorcyclist in a keffiyeh when his black bag sits like a plum pudding in the middle of the metaled track, directly in front of the doorway leading to house number seven?

The camera has closed on it. The camera enlarges it. Enlarges it again.

It's a common-or-garden black plastic bag, bound at the throat with twine or raffia. It's a bin bag. It's a bin bag with a football or a human head or a bomb in it. It's the kind of suspicious object which, if you saw it lying around untended at a railway station, you either told someone or you didn't, depending how shy you were.

The cameras were vying with each other to get at it. Aerial shots followed ground-level close-ups and wide-angle shots of the terrace at giddy-ing speed. Out to sea, the helicopter had dropped low over the mother ship in protection. In the hide, Jeb was urging sweet reason:

"It's a bag, Elliot, is what it is"—his Welsh voice at its gentlest and most persistent. "That's all we know, see. We don't know what's in it, we can't hear it, we can't smell it, can we? There's no green smoke coming out of it, no external wires or aerals that we can see, and I'm sure you can't either. Maybe it's just a kid doing a bit of fly-tipping for his mum ... No, Elliot, I don't think we'll do that, thank you. I think we'll leave it where it is and let it do whatever it was brought here to do, if you don't mind, and we'll go on waiting till it does it, same as we're waiting for *Aladdin*."

Is this an electronic silence or a human one?

"It's his weekly washing," Shorty suggested under his breath.

"No, Elliot, we're not doing that," said Jeb, his voice much sharper. "We emphatically are not going down to take a closer look inside that bag. We're not going to interfere with that bag in any way, Elliot. That could be exactly what they're waiting for us to do: they want to flush us out in case we're on the premises. Well, we're not on the premises, are we? Not for a teaser like that we're not. Which is another good reason for leaving it put."

Another fade-out, a longer one.

"We have an *arrangement*, Elliot," Jeb continued with superhuman patience. "Maybe you've forgotten that. Once the land team has fixed the target, and not before, we'll come down the hill. And your sea team, you'll come in from the sea, and together we'll finish the job. That was the arrangement. You own the sea, we own the land.

Well, the bag's on the land, isn't it? And we haven't fixed the target, and I'm not about to see our respective teams going into a dark building from opposite sides, and nobody knowing who's waiting there for us, or isn't. Do I have to repeat that, Elliot?"

"Paul?"

"Yes, Nine."

"What's your personal take on that bag? Advise me immediately. Do you buy Jeb's arguments or not?"

"Unless you have a better one, Nine, yes I do"—firm but respectful, taking his tone from Jeb's.

"Could be a warning to *Punter* to do a runner. How about that, then? Has anyone thought of that your end?"

"I'm sure they've thought about that very deeply, as I have. However, the bag could equally well be a signal to *Aladdin* to say it's safe, so come on in. Or it could be a signal to stay away. It seems to me pure speculation at best. Too many possibilities altogether, in my view," he ended boldly, even adding: "In the circumstances, Jeb's position strikes me as eminently reasonable, I have to say."

"Don't lecture me. All wait till I return."

"Of course."

"And no fucking of course!"

The line goes stone dead. No shuffle of breath, no background atmospherics. Just a long silence over the cell phone pressed harder and harder to his ear.

Jesus fuck!"—Don, at full force.

Again they are all five huddled at the arrow-slit as a high-sided car with full headlights shoots out of the tunnel and speeds towards the terraces. It's *Aladdin*, in his people carrier, late for his appointment. It's not. It's the blue Toyota four-by-four without its CONFERENCE sign. Veering off the coast road, bumping onto the metaled service track, and heading straight for the black bag.

As it approaches, the side door slides back to reveal the bespectacled Hansi bowed at the wheel and a second figure, undefined but could be Kirsty, stooped in the open doorway, one hand clutching the grab handle for dear life and the other outstretched for the bag. The Toyota's door bangs shut again. Regaining speed, the four-by-four continues north and out of sight. The plum-pudding bag has gone.

First to speak is Jeb, calmer than ever.

"Was that your people I saw just now, Elliot? Picking up the bag at all? Elliot, I need to speak to you, please. Elliot, I think you're hearing me. I need an explanation, please. Elliot?"

"Nine?"

"Yes, Paul."

"It seems that Elliot's people just picked up the bag"—doing his best to sound as rational as Jeb—"Nine? Are you there?"

Belatedly, Nine comes back, and he's strident: "We took the executive decision, for fuck's sake. Someone had to take it, right? Kindly inform Jeb. Now. The decision is set. Taken."

He is gone again. But Elliot is back at full strength, talking to an offstage female voice with an Australian accent and triumphantly relating its message to the wider audience:

"The bag contains provisions! Thank you, Kirsty. The bag contains *smoked fish*—hear that, Jeb? *Bread*. Arab bread. Thank you, Kirsty. What else do we have in that bag? We have *water*. Sparkling water. Punter likes *sparkling*. We have *chocolate*. Milk chocolate. Hold it there, thank you, Kirsty. Did you happen to catch that, Jeb? The bastard's been in there all the time, and his mates have been feeding him. We're going in, Jeb. I have my orders here in front of me, confirmed."

"Paul?"

But this is not Minister Quinn alias Nine speaking. This is Jeb's half-blackened face, his eyes whitened like a collier's, except they're palest green. And Jeb's voice, steady as before, appealing to him:

"We shouldn't be doing this, Paul. We'll be shooting at ghosts in the dark. Elliot doesn't know the half of it. I think you agree with me."

"Nine?"

"What the hell is it now? They're going in. What's the problem now, man?"

Jeb staring at him. Shorty staring at him over Jeb's shoulder:

"Nine?"

"What?"

"You asked me to be your eyes and ears, Nine. I can only agree with Jeb. Nothing I've seen or heard warrants going in at this stage."

Was the silence deliberate or technical? From Jeb, a crisp nod. From Shorty, a twisted smile of derision, whether for Quinn, or Elliot, or just all of it. And from the minister, a delayed blurt:

"The man's in there, for fuck's sake!" Gone again. Comes back. "Paul, listen to me closely. We've seen the man in full Arab garb. So've you. Punter. In there. He's got an Arab boy bringing him his food and water. What the hell more does Jeb want?"

"He wants proof, Nine. He says there isn't enough. I have to say, I feel very much the same."

Another nod from Jeb, more vigorous than the first, again backed by Shorty, then by their remaining comrades. The white eyes of all four men watching him through their balaclavas.

"Nine?"

"Doesn't anybody listen to orders over there?"

"May I speak?"

"Hurry up then!"

He is speaking for the record. He is weighing every word before he speaks it:

"Nine, it's my judgment that by any reasonable standard of analysis we're dealing with a string of unproven assumptions. Jeb and his men here have great experience. Their view is that nothing makes hard sense as it stands. As your eyes and ears on the ground, I have to tell you I share that view."

Faint voices off, then again the deep, dead silence, until Quinn comes back, shrill and petulant:

"Punter's unarmed, for fuck's sake. That was his deal with *Aladdin*. Unarmed and unescorted, one to one. He's a high-value terrorist with a pot of money on his head and a load of priceless intelligence to be got out of him, and he's sitting there for the plucking. *Paul!*"

"Still here, Nine."

Still here, but looking at the left-hand screen, as they all are. At the stern of the mother ship. At the shadow on her near side. At the inflatable dinghy lying flat on the water. At the eight crouched figures aboard.

"Paul? Give me Jeb. Jeb, are you there? I want you to listen, both of you. Jeb and Paul. Are you both listening?"

They are.

"Listen to me." They've already said they are but never mind. "If the sea team grabs the prize and gets him onto the boat and out of territorial waters into the hands of the interrogators while you lot are sitting on your arses up the hill, how d'you think *that's* going to look? Jesus Christ, Jeb, they told me you were picky, but think what's to lose, man!"

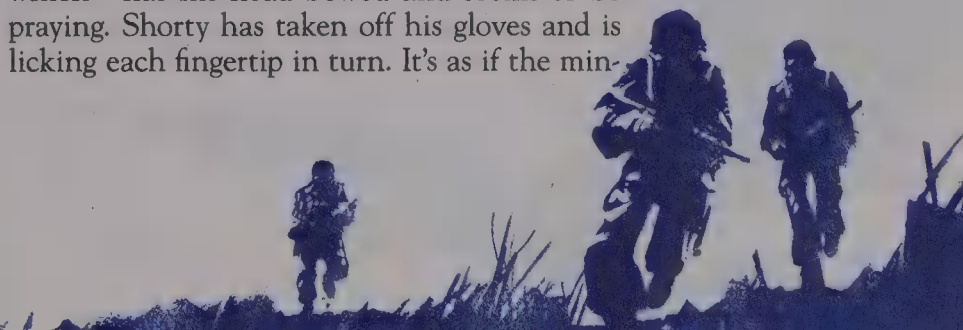
On the screen, the inflatable is no longer visible at the mother ship's side. Jeb's battle-painted face inside its scant balaclava is like an ancient war mask.

"Well, not a lot more to say to that, then, is there, Paul, I don't suppose, not now you've said it all?" he says quietly.

But Paul hasn't said it all, or not to his satisfaction. And yet again, somewhat to his surprise, he has the words ready, no fumble, no hesitation.

"With due respect, Nine, there is not, in my judgment, a sufficient case for the land team to go in. Or anyone else, for that matter."

Is this the longest silence of his life? Jeb is crouching on the ground with his back to him, busying himself with a kit-bag. Behind Jeb, his men are already standing. One—he's not sure which—has his head bowed and seems to be praying. Shorty has taken off his gloves and is licking each fingertip in turn. It's as if the min-



ister's message has reached them by other, more occult means.

"Paul?"

"Sir."

"Kindly note I am *not* the field commander in this situation. Military decisions are the sole province of the senior soldier on the ground, as you are aware. However, I may *recommend*. You will therefore inform Jeb that, on the basis of the operational intelligence before me, I *recommend* but do not *command* that he would be well advised to put *Operation Wildlife* into immediate effect. The decision to do so is of course his own."

But Jeb, having caught the drift of this message, and preferring not to wait for the rest, has vanished into the dark with his comrades.

Now with his night-vision glasses, now without, he peered into the density but saw no more sign of Jeb or his men.

On the first screen the inflatable was closing on the shore. Surf was lapping the camera, black rocks were approaching.

The second screen was dead.

He moved to the third. The camera zoomed in on house seven.

The front door was shut, the windows still uncurtained and unlit. He saw no phantom light held by a shrouded hand. Eight masked men in black were clambering out of the inflatable, one pulling another. Now two of the men were kneeling, training their weapons at a point above the camera. Three more men stole into the camera's lens and disappeared.

A camera switched to the coast road and the terrace, panning across the doors. The door to house seven was open. An armed shadow stood guard beside it. A second armed shadow slipped through it; a third, taller shadow slipped after him: Shorty.

Just in time the camera caught little Jeb with his Welsh miner's wading walk disappearing down the lighted stone staircase to the beach. Above the clatter of the wind came a clicking sound like dominoes collapsing: two sets of clicks, then nothing. He thought he heard a yell but he was listening too hard to know for sure. It was the wind. It was the nightingale. No, it was the owl.

The lights on the steps went out, and after them the orange sodium street lamps along the metaled track. As if by the same hand, the two remaining computer screens went blank.

At first he refused to accept this simple truth. He pulled on his night-vision glasses, took them off, then put them on again, and roamed the computers' keyboards, willing the screens back to life. They would not be willed.

A stray engine barked, but it could as well have been a fox as a car or the outboard of an inflatable. On his encrypted cell phone, he pressed "1" for Quinn and got a steady electronic wail. He stepped out of the hide and, standing his full height at last, braced his shoulders to the night air.

A car emerged at speed from the tunnel, cut its headlights, and screeched to a halt on the verge of the coast road. For ten minutes, twelve, nothing. Then out of the darkness Kirsty's Australian voice calling his name. And after it, Kirsty herself.

"What on earth happened?" he asked.

She steered him back into the hide.

"Mission accomplished. Everyone ecstatic. Medals all round," she said.

"What about *Punter*?"

"I said everyone's ecstatic, didn't I?"

"So they got him? They've taken him out to the mother ship?"

"You get the fuck out of here now and you stop asking questions. I'm taking you down to the car, the car takes you to the airport like we planned. The plane's waiting. Everything's in place, everything's hunky-dory. We go *now*."

"Is Jeb all right? His men? They're okay?"

"Pumped up and happy."

"What about all this stuff?"—he means the metal boxes and computers.

"This stuff will be gone in three seconds cold just as soon as we get you the fuck out of here. Now move it."

Already they were stumbling and sliding into the valley, with the sea wind whipping into them and the hum from engines out to sea louder even than the wind.

A huge bird—perhaps an eagle—scrambled out of the scrub beneath his feet, screaming its fury.

Once, he fell headlong over a broken catch-net and only the thicket saved him.

Then, just as suddenly, they were standing on the empty coast road, breathless but miraculously unharmed.

The wind had dropped, the rain had ceased. A second car was pulling up beside them. Two men in boots and tracksuits sprang out. With a nod for Kirsty and nothing for himself, they set off at a half-run towards the hillside.

"I'll need the goggles," she said.

He gave them to her.

"Have you got any papers on you—maps, anything you kept from up there?"

He hadn't.

"It was a triumph. Right? No casualties. We did a great job. All of us. You, too. Right?"

Did he say "Right" in return? It no longer mattered. Without another glance at him, she was heading off in the wake of the two men. ■

By John le Carré

I wrote *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* at the age of thirty under intense, unshared, personal stress, and in extreme privacy. As an intelligence officer in the guise of a junior diplomat at the British Embassy in Bonn, I was a secret to my colleagues, and much of the time to myself. I had written a couple of earlier novels, necessarily under a pseudonym, and my employing service had approved them before publication. After lengthy soul-searching, they had also approved *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*. To this day, I don't know what I would have done if they hadn't.

As it was, they seem to have concluded, rightly if reluctantly, that the book was sheer fiction from start to finish, uninformed by personal experience, and that accordingly it constituted no breach of security. This was not, however, the view taken by the world's press, which with one voice decided that the book was not merely authentic but some kind of revelatory Message From The Other Side, leaving me with nothing to do but sit tight and watch, in a kind of frozen awe, as it climbed the bestseller list and stuck there, while pundit after pundit heralded it as the real thing.

And to my awe, add over time a kind of impotent anger.

Anger, because from the day my novel was published, I realized that now and forevermore I was to be branded as the spy turned writer, rather than as a writer who, like scores of his kind, had done a stint in the secret world and written about it.

But journalists of the time weren't having any of that. I was the British spy who had come out of the woodwork and told it how it really was, and anything I said to the contrary only enforced the myth. And since I was writing for a public hooked on Bond and desperate for the antidote, the myth stuck. Meanwhile, I was receiving the sort of attention writers dream of. My only problem was, I didn't believe my own publicity. I didn't like it even while I was subscribing to it, and there was in the most literal sense nothing I could say to stop the bandwagon, even if I'd wanted to. And I wasn't sure I did.

In the Sixties—and right up to the present day—the identity of a member of the British secret service was and is, quite rightly, a state secret. To divulge it is a crime. The service may choose to leak a name when it pleases them. They may showcase an intelligence baron or two to give us a glimpse of their omniscience and—wait for it—openness. But woe betide a leaky former member.

And anyway I had my own inhibitions. I had no quarrel with my former employers, quite the contrary. Presenting myself to the press in New York a few months after the novel had made its mark in the States, I dutifully if nervously mouthed my denials: no, no, I had never been in the spy business; no, it was just a bad dream: which of course it was.

The paradox was compounded when an American journalist with connections told me out of the corner of his mouth that the reigning chief of my service had advised a former director of the CIA that I had been his serving officer, and that he had told nobody but his very large retinue of best friends, and that anyone in the room who was anyone knew I was lying.

Every interview I have faced in the fifty years since then seems designed to penetrate a truth that isn't there, and perhaps that's one reason why I have become allergic to the process.

The *Spy Who Came in from the Cold* was the work of a wayward imagination brought to the end of its tether by political disgust and personal con-

fusion. Fifty years on, I don't associate the book with anything that ever happened to me, save for one wordless encounter at London airport when a worn-out middle-aged military kind of man in a stained raincoat slammed a handful of mixed foreign change onto the bar and in gritty Irish accents ordered himself as much Scotch as it would buy. In that moment, Alec Leamas was born. Or so my memory, not always a reliable informant, tells me.

Today I think of the novel as a not-very-well-disguised internal explosion after which my life would never be the same. It was not the first such explosion, or the last. And yes, yes, by the time I wrote it, I had been caught up in secret work off and on for a decade; a decade the more formative because I had the inherited guilt of being too young to fight in the Second World War and—more importantly—of being the son of a war profiteer, another secret I felt I had to keep to myself until he died.

But I was never a mastermind, or a mini-mind, and long before I even entered the secret world, I had an instinct towards fiction that made me a dubious fact gatherer. I was never at personal risk in my secret work; I was frequently bored stiff by it. Had things been otherwise, my employers would not have allowed me to publish my novel, even if later they kicked themselves for doing so: but that was because they decided it was being taken too seriously by too many people; and because any suggestion that the British secret service would betray its own was deemed derogatory to its ethical principles, bad for recruitment, and accordingly Bad for Britain, a charge to which there is no effective answer.

The proof that the novel was not “authentic”—how many times did I have to repeat this?—had been delivered by the fact that it was published. Indeed, one former head of a department that had employed me has since gone on record to declare that my contribution was negligible, which I can well believe. Another described the novel as “the only bloody double-agent operation that ever worked”—not true, but fun. The trouble is, when professional spies go out of their way to make a definitive statement about one of their own, the public tends to believe the opposite: which puts us all back where we started, myself included.

And if the spies hadn't had me at that age, some equally luckless institution would have done, and after a couple of years I'd have been digging my way out.

And the deep background of the novel? The sights, smells, and voices that, fifteen years after the end of the war, continued to infest every corner of divided Germany? The Berlin in which Leamas had his being was a paradigm of human folly and historical paradox. In the early Sixties I had observed it mostly from the confines of the British Embassy in Bonn, and only occasionally in the raw. But I watched the Wall's progress from barbed wire to breeze block; I watched the ramparts of the Cold War going up on the still-warm ashes of the hot one. And I had absolutely no sense of transition from the one war to the other, because in the secret world there barely was one. To the hard-liners of East and West the Second World War was a distraction. Now it was over, they could get on with the real war that had started with the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and had been running under different flags and disguises ever since.

No wonder then if Alec Leamas found himself rubbing shoulders with some pretty unsavory colleagues in the ranks of Western intelligence. Former Nazis with attractive qualifications weren't just tolerated by the Allies; they were positively molycoddled for their anti-Communist credentials. Who was America's first choice to head West Germany's embryonic intelligence service? General Reinhard Gehlen, former chief of Hitler's Foreign Armies East (Russian theater), where he had made himself a corner in the Soviet order of battle. Anticipating Germany's defeat, the General had assembled his files and his people, and at the first opportunity turned them over to the Americans, who accepted them with open arms. Recruited, Gehlen tactfully dropped the “General” and became “Herr Doktor” instead.

But where to house this precious asset and his crown jewels? The Americans decided to install Gehlen and his people in the cosy Bavarian village of

Pullach, some eight miles outside Munich and handy for their intelligence headquarters. And whose handsome country estate, now vacant, did they select for *Herr Doktor*? Martin Bormann was Hitler's most trusted confidant and private secretary. When the Führer established himself at his Eagle's Nest just up the road, his buddies scurried to set up house nearby. Gehlen and his people were settled in Martin Bormann's villa, now the subject of a conservation order issued by the Bavarian government. Just a few years ago, in circumstances of extraordinary courtesy, one of the Bundesnachrichtendienst's latter-day luminaries gave me a personal tour. I recommend the 1930s furniture in the conference room, and the Jugendstil statues in the gardens at the back. But the main attraction must surely be the great dark staircase winding into the cellars, and the fully furnished bunker, just like the Führer's, but smaller.

Was Alec Leamas a regular visitor to Pullach? He had no choice. Few secret operations into East Germany could take place without the connivance of the BND. And did Leamas, on his regular visits, perhaps come across *Herr Doktor*'s valued chief of counterintelligence, Heinz Felfe, formerly of the SS and Sicherheitsdienst? He must have done. Felfe was a legendary operator. Had he not single-handedly unmasked a raft of Soviet spies? Of course he had, and no wonder. When he was finally unmasked himself, he got fourteen years for spying for Moscow, only to be traded for a bunch of hapless West Germans held there.

Did Leamas enjoy access to the ultrasecret "special material" obtained by Operation GOLD, the hugely costly quarter-mile-long Anglo-American audio tunnel that tapped into Russian cables a couple of feet below the surface of a road in the Eastern Sector of Berlin? Before the first spade went into the ground, GOLD had been comprehensively blown by a Soviet agent named George Blake, the heroic ex-prisoner of North Korea and pride of the British secret service.

Yet to this day, many of GOLD's architects would have us believe that their operation was not merely an engineering triumph but an intelligence coup as well, on the questionable grounds that, so reluctant were the Russians to blow their agent, they let communications flow as usual. Dissolve to a couple of years later and Kim Philby, once in line for chief, was also revealed as Moscow's man. No wonder poor Leamas needed that stiff Scotch at London airport. The service that owned his unflinching allegiance was in a state of corporate rot that would take another generation to heal. Did he know that? I think deep down he did.

T And I think I must have known it too, or I wouldn't have written *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* a few years down the line.

The merit of *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, then—or its offense, depending where you stood—was not that it was authentic but that it was credible. The bad dream turned out to be one that a lot of people in the world were sharing, since it asked the same old question that we are asking ourselves fifty years later: How far can we go in the rightful defense of our Western values without abandoning them along the way? My fictional chief of the British service—I called him Control—had no doubt of the answer:

I mean, you can't be less ruthless than the opposition simply because your government's *policy* is benevolent, can you now?

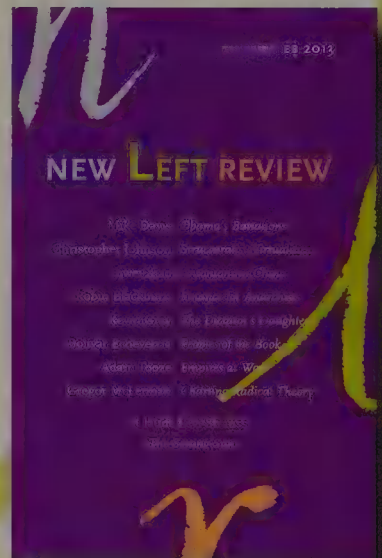
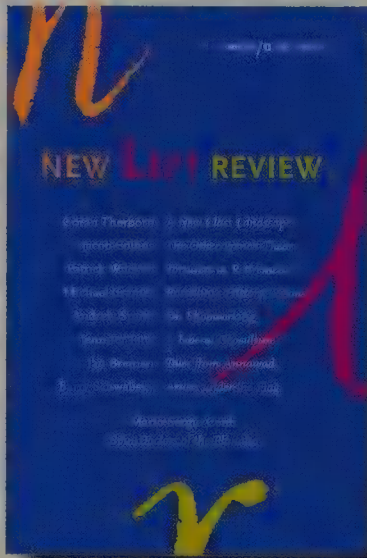
Today, the same man, with better teeth and hair and a much smarter suit, can be heard explaining away the catastrophic illegal war in Iraq, or justifying medieval torture techniques as the preferred means of interrogation in the twenty-first century, or defending the inalienable right of closet psychopaths to bear semiautomatic weapons, and the use of unmanned drones as a risk-free method of assassinating one's perceived enemies and anybody who has the bad luck to be standing near them. Or, as a loyal servant of his corporation, assuring us that smoking is harmless to the health of the Third World and great banks are there to serve the public.

What have I learned over the last fifty years? Come to think of it, not much. Just that the morals of the secret world are very like our own. ■

*In the latest **New Left Review***

IN 2012, THE LEFT wing of the Democratic Party had no influence on a campaign agenda that was so deliberately minimalist that it might be compared to a Frank Stella or John Cage masterpiece. Poverty, hunger, urban decay, the defence of public education, union rights, corporate crimes, totalitarian surveillance, home foreclosures, amnesty for drug war prisoners, Palestinian statehood, and all the other issues that constitute a progressive agenda were buried deeper than in any election in memory—Mike Davis, *'The Last White Election'*, NLR 79

Also in **NLR 79**: **Christopher Johnson** on Lévi-Strauss's philosophy of history; in a last interview, **Claude Lévi-Strauss** discusses his work and the future of anthropology; **Kevin Gray** on Korean political cultures; **Jiwei Xiao** on Antonioni's neglected documentary *Chung Kuo*; **Bolívar Echeverría** on the supposed extinction of the reader; **Adam Tooze** reviews Michael Mann's account of the 20th century's crises; **Robin Blackburn** on an anthropological enquiry into debt; **Gregor McLennan** on the legacies and prospects of radical social theory.

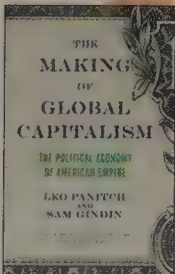
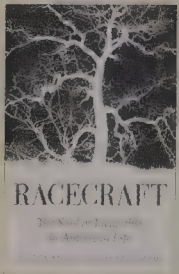


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MARTYRDOMS OF LIGHT

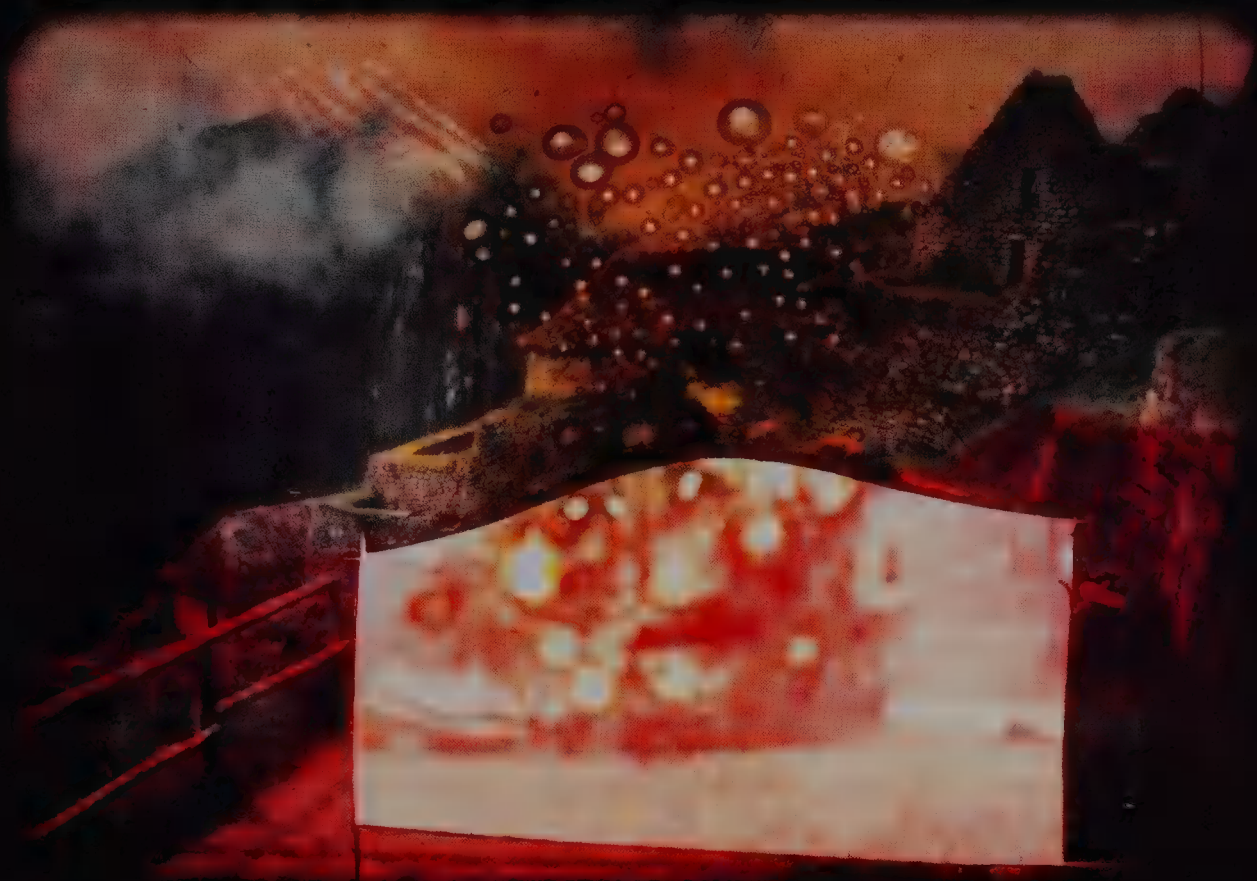
By Ishmael Randall Weeks



In a slide projection entitled *Cuts, Burns, Punctures*, Ishmael Randall Weeks uses found slides from 1970s and '80s Peru, which he alters to reflect on the violence of the country's multidecade struggle for democracy.

*Ishmael Randall Weeks is based in Cusco, Peru, and New York City.
Cuts, Burns, Punctures was on view this winter at the Drawing Center, in New York City.*





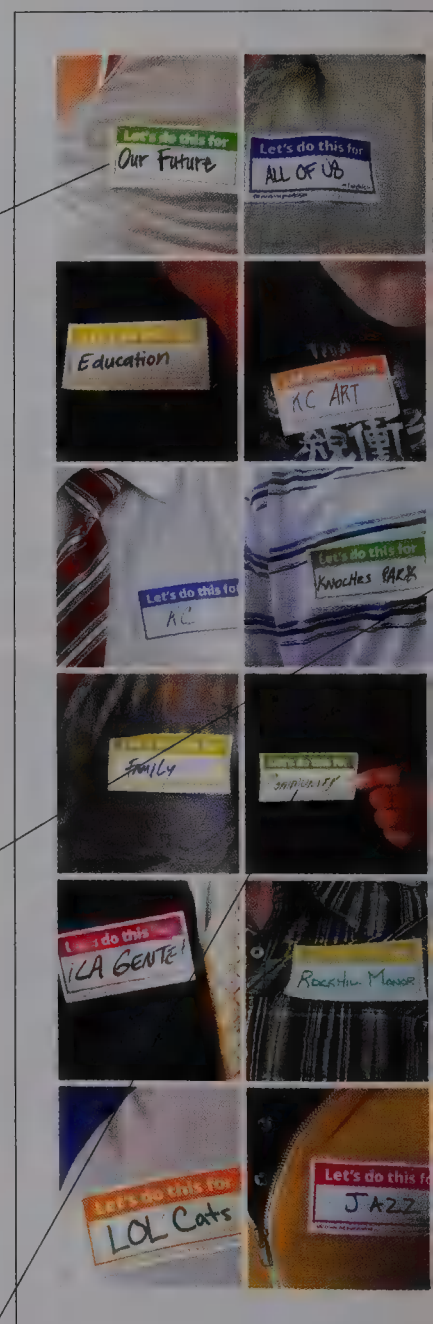
ONLY C

Kansas City gives it up for Google

In its 2010 National Broadband Plan, the Federal Communications Commission declared, "Every American should have affordable access to robust broadband service." It's a worthy goal, given that nearly 100 million Americans still lack high-speed access to the Web. But how should this goal be achieved? The FCC could have looked back to successful New Deal programs that expanded access to electricity. In the early decades of the twentieth century, private holding companies controlled 94 percent of the power generation in the United States and kept the vast majority of rural areas dark. In response, Franklin Roosevelt persuaded Congress to finance locally owned electric cooperatives and larger, government-owned bodies such as the Tennessee Valley Authority to bring power to rural customers at a reasonable price. Unfortunately, the FCC's plan primarily advocates a return to the Roaring Twenties. The agency argues that the market needs less regulation, not more—and that the best candidates to fund and control the nation's next-generation networks are private companies. This is the philosophy that has brought Google to Kansas City, where the search-engine leviathan has signed a deal to build a citywide fiber-optic network.

Fiber-optic cable can transfer roughly 1,000 times more data per second than most existing copper cable. And yet for years, private telecom companies have neglected comprehensive upgrades—a failure the FCC blames on excessive government interference rather than corporate eagerness to squeeze every last penny out of antiquated infrastructure. During a September 2012 visit to Kansas City, FCC commissioner Ajit Pai (formerly associate general counsel for Verizon) sounded the antiregulatory battle cry. To get fiber-optic networks off the ground, he said, "we need to eliminate regulatory barriers . . . at *all* levels of government." The city has certainly complied. According to its contract, Kansas City must give Google access to its underground conduits, fiber, poles, rack space, nodes, buildings, facilities, and available land. It cannot charge the company for "access to or use of any city facilities . . . nor will it impose any permit and inspection fees." And what does the city get in return? It has no say in the pricing of Google's services, nor can it ensure that Google will deliver fiber-optic service to all of the city's residents. Google's offices, meeting spaces, and showroom are provided free of charge, and the city pays the company's electric bill. The mayor, moreover, is barred from commenting on Google's activities without the express permission of Google.

Why does Google feel so at home in Kansas City—rather than in, say, California, where the company is based? Why not build their first citywide fiber-optic network in a nearby community? According to Google vice president Milo Medin, the company has preferred to steer clear of such pesky statutes as the California Environmental Quality Act. "Many fine California city proposals . . . were ultimately passed over in part because of the regulatory complexity here," Medin told a congressional committee in 2011. "In fact, part of the reason we selected Kansas City for the Google Fiber project was [that] the city's leadership and utility moved with efficiency and creativity in working with us to craft a real partnership." Conservative pundits have been much more explicit about what this kind of "partnership" means. In a blog post on the project, former FCC official Fred Campbell celebrated Google's "rejection of the public-interest community's regulatory agenda. . . . That's the policy template that worked for the residents of Kansas City. It could work for the rest of America too."



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Our Families

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with Google fiber

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Despite the hand-wringing from Google and the FCC over governmental “red tape,” private corporations have actually been the more creative parties when it comes to obstructing fiber-optic networks. In 2004, Lafayette, Louisiana, asked BellSouth and Cox Communications whether either company would be willing to create such a network in the city. Both refused, saying that Lafayette, with its population of 120,000, was too small for such a large investment. But when Lafayette decided to build its own network through its public utility, Cox and BellSouth began a campaign of civil suits and lobbying that delayed the network’s deployment by three years and cost the city \$4 million. Similar industry scare tactics have delayed or derailed municipal fiber-optic projects in Bristol, Virginia; Longmont, Colorado; and Monticello, Minnesota. In North Carolina, state legislators actually passed a bill designed to *deter* local governments from building their own broadband networks. Meanwhile, Lafayette’s municipally owned and financed fiber-optic network began service in 2009. Comparable networks have gone live in the Tennessee cities of Chattanooga and Bristol, where the local utilities are—perhaps not coincidentally—customers of the federally owned Tennessee Valley Authority.

Whitney Terrell is the New Letters Writer-in-Residence at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the author of *The King of Kings County*. Shannon Jackson is an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

THE SUPER BOWL! (OF FISHING)

In search of a hero at the Bassmaster Classic

By Paul Wachter

Larry Hackett, the managing editor of *People* magazine, looks like a man who wants to look like Anderson Cooper. It's just a few days before the Academy Awards, and normally Hackett would be in Los Angeles among the celebrities his publication so devotedly covers. But instead he's here in Shreveport, Louisiana, to give the keynote speech at the 2012 Bassmaster Classic opening gala.

"I can't tell you the looks on the faces of my staff members when I said that I was leaving," he tells the audience. "They said, 'You're going to the Oscars?' and I said, 'No, I'm going to Shreveport.'"

Hackett had been invited to speak by his buddy Don Logan, a former executive of Time Warner and one of the three men who in 2010 purchased the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (BASS), which runs the tournament, from ESPN.

For reasons I cannot fathom, the bulk of Hackett's speech is devoted to analyzing various *People* photo spreads. A shot of the Olympic figure skater Johnny Weir appears on the screen next to Hackett, who says of Weir's outfit, "You can dress like Johnny Weir, but I have a feeling that's not going to go over very well on a bass boat." The audience is

Paul Wachter is a California-based journalist and the cofounder of the news aggregator againstdumb.com.

mostly silent. Unfazed, Hackett asks the audience to guess, by way of applause, which celebrity covers translated into the highest newsstand sales. Steve Jobs or Amy Winehouse? Elizabeth Taylor or Whitney Houston? It's a testament to the graciousness of the fishermen here that Hackett receives even tepid applause as he exits the stage.

Perhaps Hackett meant his speech to be instructive. Coverage of last year's tournament on ESPN2 drew an average of about 280,000 viewers. *People's* readership, he bragged, was 40 million a week, and he suggested that BASS, too, could reach a larger audience by promoting its stars to the masses.

By far the sport's biggest celebrity is Kevin VanDam, the defending Classic champion, who also takes the stage on opening night. Most of the other anglers are wearing slacks and button-down shirts, and a few are in jeans, but VanDam wears a charcoal suit and scrupulously gelled hair. He's handsome and gracious and, at forty-four, he's at the heart of the Classic's white, middle-aged, mostly male viewer demographic.

VanDam's brief speech is a kind of pep talk for those fishermen who think that ESPN made the Classic too commercial. Under BASS's first owners, he admits, there was a greater sense of camaraderie and intimacy

among the competitors. "But somewhere along the way, we kind of got away from that."

ESPN had wanted to make bass fishing the new NASCAR—before NASCAR itself lost its national audience. The new owners are passionate amateur bass fishermen, and VanDam assures the crowd that (Larry Hackett aside) the tournament is returning to its earlier sense of intimacy.

ESPN still has the television rights to the Classic, and for the past few weeks they have run numerous promos for the tournament, almost all of which have featured VanDam. The sport has more electric, even outlandish, personalities, but VanDam's dominance is undeniable. He's already tied the record—four—for Classic titles. He's been crowned BASS's Angler of the Year seven times. Now he's trying to win a third Classic in a row—an unprecedented feat that could finally give professional fishing a few minutes in the national spotlight.

The boats are luminous, even in the predawn darkness. Shiny decals—advertisements for Yamaha and Mercury motors, Abu Garcia reels, and Strike King lures—attract the few lights that are on at the Red River South Marina, this year's starting point for the Classic. Already, hun-



dreds of people are milling about, and it's hard to distinguish between the volunteer workers and the fans.

VanDam is lining up his rods and tinkering with his lures—the crankbaits, spinnerbaits, worms, and jigs he'll employ throughout the day. He doesn't go out of his way to acknowledge any of the onlookers, and when a few address him directly he keeps his answers short. But his demeanor changes once he approaches the boat ramp in his Toyota Tundra, which is also covered with decals. "Let's go, Kevie!" a woman shouts, and VanDam smiles. Others holler "KVD," an initialism he says his fans and the media created but that he has embraced. VanDam signs a few autographs. The procession to the water is slow and at times chaotic. Brent Chapman, a Kansas angler, accidentally steers his truck into a man, who crumples to the ground. After a frightful minute, the man gets back on his feet, seemingly unharmed.

VanDam backs his boat into the water, and I join him on board. The tournament organizers had assured me I'd be riding along with VanDam

on opening day, occupying the sole passenger seat. But VanDam's not so sure. "Don't be surprised if a cameraman kicks you out," he tells me. Sure enough, a couple of minutes later a cameraman does exactly that. I should have expected it: there's no way ESPN would broadcast the tournament without close-ups of KVD.

Dawn is breaking, but the early stirrings along the river are drowned out by the Auto-Tuned verses of Taio Cruz's club hit "Dynamite" blasting from speakers onshore. At precisely 7:00 A.M., the Classic starts. The rules are simple: after eight hours on the water, each of the competitors weighs his five heaviest fish, assuming he's caught that many; repeat for two additional days, with the field winnowed to twenty-five after the second day. Whoever has accumulated the highest total weight gets the trophy and a check for \$500,000. Second prize is \$45,000.

Because he won last year's event, VanDam gets to leave the docks first, a slight but valuable advantage. A hundred-mile stretch of the Red River

is at his disposal. There are practice days during the week before the tournament, and many of the anglers have made scouting trips to the river months prior to the event. Some can also draw on their memories from 2009, the last time the Red River hosted the Classic. But conditions—currents, weather, water level, air pressure—change by the hour, and with them the behavior of the fish. It's spawning season, though, and there are sure to be bass somewhere.

The earliest guide to sport fishing is attributed to the prioress of a Benedictine nunnery in Hertfordshire, England. Juliana Berners's *A Treatyse of Fysshynge wythe an Angle*, which was first printed in 1496, is basically a how-to guide, with detailed advice, including illustrations, on assembling rods, lines, and hooks. It also offers strategies for catching different species of fish. "The samon is a gentyll fysshe: but he is comborous for to take," Berners observes. "For comynly he is but in depe places of grete ryuers: and for the more parte he holdyth the

myddys of it: that a man maye not come at hym.”

Berners goes on to dispense advice on pike, flounder, trout, and bream—but no bass. The *Micropterus* genus of bass—the largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted, which are known collectively as black bass—is native to North America. In the 1770s, the Philadelphia-born naturalist William Bartram traveled through the American South and later wrote one of the first accounts of bass fishing (though he called them trout). He described two men—colonists, not American Indians—sitting in a canoe, one holding a rod and line attached to “three large hooks, back to back.” The hooks were

covered with the white hair of a deer’s tail, shreds of a red garter, and some particoloured feathers, all of which form a tuft, or tassel, nearly as large as one’s fist, and entirely cover and conceal the hooks.

Bartram went on to describe the moment the fish “seizes the supposed prey” and is jerked into the boat.

Bass came to the northeast by way of the Erie Canal, which was completed in 1825. As the railroads expanded west, people stocked the tank ponds with them (the fish were filtered out before the water was added to the locomotive’s steam engine). The country’s great dam projects accelerated bass fishing’s ascendancy: trout streams were wiped out, replaced by vast warm-water expanses that favored bass.

But bass fishing didn’t become popular as a participatory sport until after the Second World War. Between 1946 and 1968, the number of anglers in the country tripled, from 13 million to 39 million. In his book *Bass Boss*, Robert H. Boyle, a reporter for *Sports Illustrated*, tells the story of how the Classic was created. In 1967, during a business trip to Mississippi, an insurance salesman from Alabama named Ray Scott took a day off to go fishing. After he got caught in a hailstorm on the lake, Scott returned to his hotel early. Restless, he turned on the television. He started watching a basketball game, but as he did he wondered why he had never seen fishing on television. “In a microsecond I saw it all,” Scott

told Boyle. “I saw a hundred bass fishermen competing, tournament-style. It just came to me. I knew it would work.”

A few months later, Scott hosted his first tournament, on Arkansas’s Beaver Lake. It drew 106 anglers and charged a \$100 entry fee. Scott lost \$600 funding the venture, but the tournament was a hit. Soon after, he established BASS and a magazine, free with membership, called *Bassmaster*. (Currently, there are about 520,000 BASS members.) Meanwhile, he kept organizing tournaments, including the first Bassmaster Classic, which was held on Nevada’s Lake Mead in 1971.

Scott sold BASS to a group of investors in 1986 (who in turn sold it to ESPN in 2001), but the charismatic founder still comes to many of the major events. When I met him, Scott told me his advocacy for bass fishing was more than mere salesmanship: “I’m a prospector,” he said. “You know who the first prospector was? Jesus. I’d sell a guy a subscription to BASS for ten dollars and write him a personal thank-you letter. Ten dollars doesn’t even buy you shotgun wad, but I’d get that guy to sign up several of his friends, and so on—just like how Jesus did it in the Gospels.”

Most of the hundred miles of river designated for the tournament lie downstream of the marina, to the south, but on Friday morning VanDam steers his boat toward a small inlet, about the size of a football field, a few hundred yards upriver, where he had caught fish on the practice days. Even at seventy-five miles an hour, his boat’s top speed, it would have taken VanDam almost an hour to make the run to his preferred spots downriver, including idle time in at least one lock. The Red River itself—deep, muddy, and fast-moving—is useless for bass fishing. Bass tend to seek out shallow water, as well as tree stumps, foliage, and fallen logs, which make for convenient hiding places.

Following my eviction by the cameraman, I trail VanDam in a boat driven by Michael Bedgood, an event volunteer who runs a local logging company. He used to be an avid softball player, but a knee injury and some

extra pounds brought him to the more sedentary joys of fishing. He competes in local tournaments and regards VanDam with awe. BASS pays Bedgood a per diem to cover food and gas—in eight hours we go through forty gallons—but he says he’d happily do it for free. (Most of the competitors’ boats have tanks that hold more than sixty gallons, so running out of gas is rare.)

VanDam kills the engine, leaps from his seat, and grabs one of the half dozen rods strapped to the deck. About twenty more rods, meticulously rigged with an assortment of





lures, are stored in the hull. He walks to the bow, where there's a second, much smaller motor, which he lowers into the water. Attached to a foot-controlled steering mechanism, the trolling motor allows an angler to fish and move (or, in strong currents, *not* move) at the same time. But VanDam barely has time for a dozen casts before last year's runner-up, Aaron Martens, enters the inlet. Within ten minutes, three more anglers join, and Bedgood quips, "Looks like Kevin has a magnet on his boat."

One of the unwritten rules in tournament bass fishing is that you don't

crowd another angler or infringe upon his territory. The subject arose when I first met VanDam in September 2011 at the Toyota Texas Bass Classic, a non-BASS event, held on Lake Conroe, Texas, an hour north of Houston. I had joined VanDam for a practice session. Midway through the day he landed a sizable largemouth bass, maybe a three-and-a-half-pounder. He was casting near a sandbar, and he recorded our location onto a GPS tracking unit—he might want to return during the tournament. At the same moment he spotted another angler, Keith Combs,

who had crowded him at the Classic earlier that year. VanDam didn't want Combs to see he had landed a big fish. Using his body to shield Combs's line of sight, he tossed the bass over to my side of the boat. Then he asked me to discreetly drop it back into the lake. Grabbing the fish by its lower lip—that's how you hold a bass—I did just that.

Combs went on to win the tournament, which carried a \$100,000 top prize, fishing nowhere near our place of subterfuge. And here on the Red River, I know for a fact that Martens isn't trying to shadow VanDam. I had



accompanied Martens, a spacey California native who punctuates his speech with “dude”s and “bro”s, during the final practice session, and he had told me he would start the tournament in the inlet. VanDam, who likes Martens, doesn’t take offense: “It’s a community spot,” he later tells reporters.

VanDam disappears farther back into the inlet, out of sight, but Bedgood doesn’t want to follow lest he get a tongue-lashing for coming too close. A few minutes later, VanDam reappears. He’s caught a bass, but only a two-pounder, which he has dropped into his boat’s live well—a tank that keeps the fish trapped but alive. (Starting with the second Bassmaster Classic, Ray Scott mandated that all fish be kept alive and then released into their natural habitat after the weigh-in. A competitor is penalized for dead fish.)

The fifteen fish that won Skeet Reese the 2009 Bassmaster Classic on this very river weighed a total of fifty-four pounds and thirteen ounces, averaging about three and a half pounds each. So at 8:35 A.M., his face betraying no emotion, VanDam leaves the inlet and guns his motor for the long run downriver.

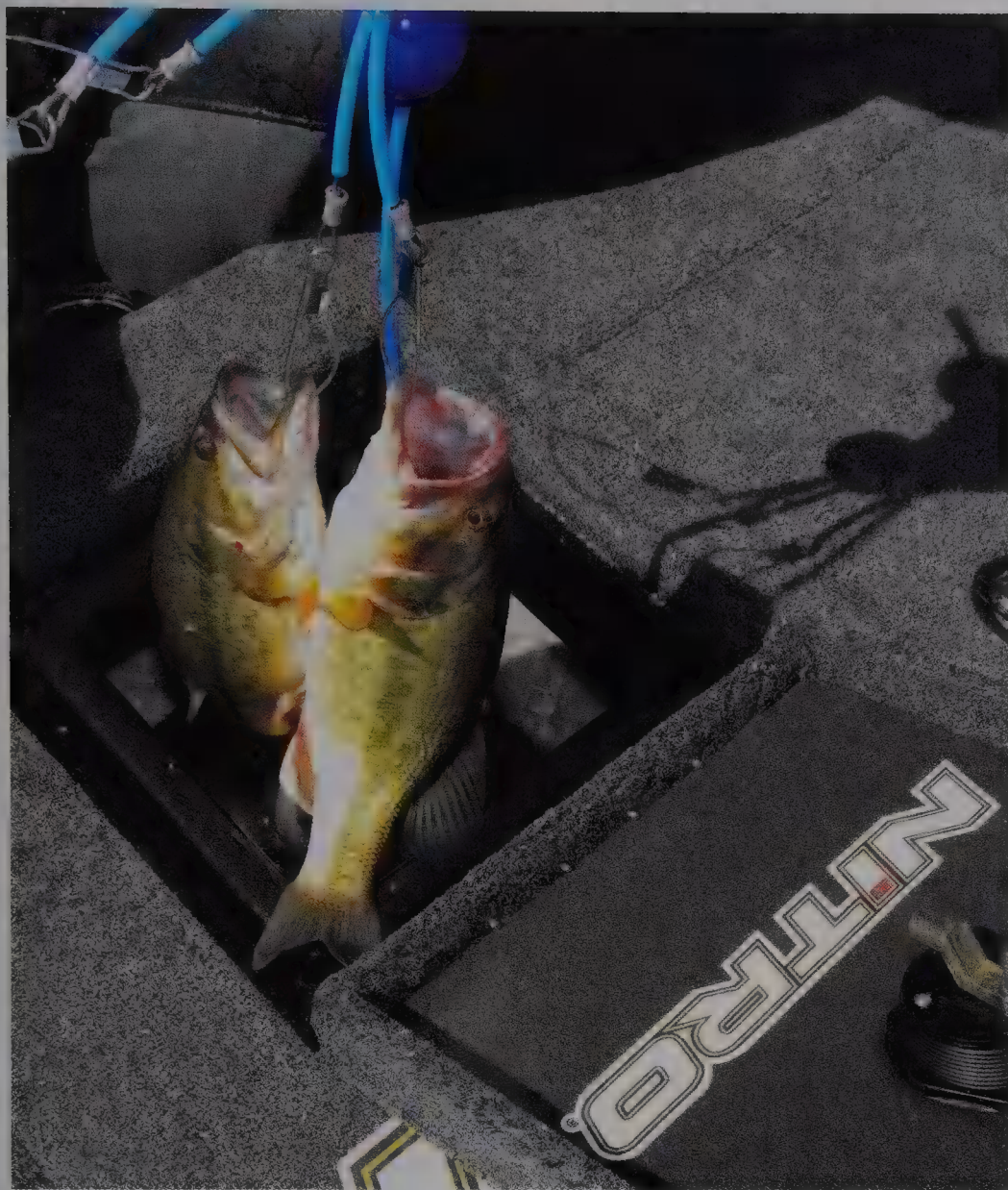
VanDam grew up outside Kalamazoo, Michigan, a city best known in sports circles for hosting the national junior tennis championships. The family business was construction, and they had a cabin on Lake Leelanau, near Traverse City. “My earliest memory of fishing is being on the ice with my father when I was three,” VanDam says.

Later VanDam would fish with his brother, Randy, who is seven years older. They would ride their bikes to nearby streams and ponds. “We taught

ourselves, mostly,” Randy says. “Some kids traded baseball cards, but we traded fishing lures.”

Randy remembers their first tournament together, when VanDam was fourteen. “There were about thirty-five or forty boats entered and a lot of good local fishermen—the top dogs,” he says. The brothers placed second and won a small cash prize. But VanDam also caught the tournament’s biggest bass, “using a black jig with an orange Uncle Josh trailer,” Randy says. The big-bass pot was one hundred dollars. “Now, part of the thing about fishing team tournaments is that no matter who catches the fish you split the winnings,” Randy says. “Well, this was his first tournament, and he thought he should have all the winnings—and I made him split them.”

The boys’ father, Dick VanDam, marveled at his younger son’s work ethic, the long hours he put in off the



water. "Every day he'd change the line on every rod that he used—and he still does it—to make sure there was no small fray or anything else that was going to cost him losing a fish," Dick says.

Randy opened a hunting and fishing store in Kalamazoo. In the late 1980s, when VanDam was working at his brother's store and fishing local tournaments, he met a girl named Sherry Campbell. They started dating just as he was turning professional. After five years together they got married, and eventually Sherry gave birth to twin boys, Jackson and Nicholas. For the next five years they were a traveling family on the BASS tour.

When the twins started school, Sherry settled back in Kalamazoo and became VanDam's de facto agent. "It's my business too," she says. Her days are spent managing travel arrangements, taxes, sponsorship contracts, and media appearances. When I spoke with

her, she was working on organizing a charity tournament featuring VanDam and members of the Detroit Lions. Still, she stops short of offering her husband strategic advice. "After twenty-two years of this, I can talk the talk, and I know all the lingo about spinnerbaits and crankbaits and whatnot," she says. "But I have no clue how to walk the walk."

In 1992, at the age of twenty-five, VanDam became the youngest person to be crowned BASS Angler of the Year. Other professional anglers took note of his early success, and some resented it. "He came across as brash, and plus he was a Yankee," says Steve Price, a journalist who has covered the sport since 1976. "That combination got everybody a little upset. But then he backed it up for the next twenty years."

"At the time," Randy VanDam remembers, "the sport was a Southern

Bubba's game, and he wasn't part of that. When he cashed check after check, it kind of woke them up a little bit."

VanDam is known as a power fisher as opposed to a finesse fisher. Mike Iaconelli, who won the 2003 Classic and is the sport's loudest personality—his full-throated, fist-pumping celebrations landed him on GQ's "Ten Most Hated Athletes" list—explains the distinction in a video clip on his personal website:

Power fishing means you're covering a lot of water. You got the troll motor on high, you're throwing big baits, you're reeling them in fast. But more than anything, power fishing means you're trying to get a reaction bite. And in fishing there's two kinds of strikes you can get, two kinds of bites to get. One is a reaction strike, and one is a hunger strike. Most of the time, when you're finesse fishing, you're generating a hunger strike. You're trying to make that bait look natural, and it's light line and those fish are eating it out of hunger. But in power fishing, using the fall of the bait, using the wiggle or the speed of the bait, you're trying to trigger a reaction strike. And what that means is that the fish isn't necessarily hungry. And that's good because nine times out of ten when you're fishing, you're not fishing during periods when the fish are actively feeding so you need to trigger that fish to bite.

VanDam has published two instructional books, which include long chapters on tackle, weather, water clarity, and numerous other variables. The writings are meant for the amateur angler, but they demonstrate how specialized VanDam's knowledge is:

When fishing heavy weed beds of the north or when shad pull into the matted grass in the backs of creeks, I like a wooden jerkbait that is highly buoyant and can be fished in the pockets of the weeds.

Many anglers would prefer to fish a soft plastic jerkbait in that situation, but one of my favorites is the A.C. Shiner, a balsa minnow lure that can be worked like a topwater or a jerkbait. You can give the A.C. Shiner a lot of action without moving it from the strike zone. If you jerk it forward then give it slack, it will move backwards. I snap it hard and fast, only an inch or two, to make the bait flash and roll.

A few professional anglers have degrees in fish biology and related fields, but none have come close to matching VanDam's success. "Put a biologist out on this lake with me," VanDam told me on Lake Conroe, "and I guarantee you I'll catch more fish."

After his dash downriver, VanDam spends the rest of the day near the western shores of a backwater called Sullivan's. Casting near the hyacinth-covered banks, it takes VanDam nearly three hours to make his five-bass limit, and none of the fish appear to be larger than two pounds. After making a limit, the anglers are free to keep fishing—they simply swap out smaller bass from their live wells for bigger ones. But VanDam never lands a big one, and when he returns to the docks he knows he's far off the lead.

Since I didn't get to ride with him in the boat, he offers me a lift from the marina to the CenturyLink Center, an indoor arena in Bossier City, Shreveport's twin across the Red River, where each day's weigh-in is staged. I feel awkward and wonder, given his disappointing day, if he'll be surly or withdrawn. But when we get in his truck, he turns to me and says, "If there's anything you want to ask, now's the time." What happened, I ask. There were two factors that hurt him, he says. "The biggest was the wind picked up, and that, combined with the cold front, pushed the fish out of the areas where I was catching them during practice. The water got real dirty."

Nonetheless, he's happy to have met the five-fish limit. "It's a small limit, no doubt about it," he says, "but the important thing about the Classic is you want to make sure you're not out of it after the first day."

BASS officials say that 93,609 people are at the 2012 Bassmaster Classic. Of that number, fewer than 1 percent actually spend any time watching fishing on the Red River, which remains open to the public during the event. Even the few fans who do take to boats can shadow only a handful of competitors, who are spread out over dozens of square miles of water. So it's at the weigh-in that fans will get their closest look at the anglers. Admission is free.

At one end of the arena there's a stage and multiple screens showing the day's highlights. Dave Mercer, a portly man who hosts a show on Canada's World Fishing Network, is the emcee. At some fishing events, the weigh-in is a minor draw. During the Toyota Texas Bass Classic, the crowds came mainly for the nightly concerts by such country singers as Pat Green and Billy Currington. But at the CenturyLink Center, the peripheral entertainment precedes the weigh-in and is kept short.

The anglers enter one at a time, sitting in their boats as trucks pull them toward the stage, each procession accompanied by music of the competitor's choosing. As befits the suburban and exurban audience of the Classic, country tunes are the most popular choice, though hip-hop is also well represented. Iaconelli enters to a personalized rap track extolling his fishing prowess. Martens has picked LMFAO's "Sexy and I Know It." VanDam, who doesn't like country or hip-hop, enters to a generic contemporary-rock number that I can't place. "I don't spend any time thinking about my song," he tells me. "I let fans choose it." (I later learn it's "Ladies and Gentlemen," by a band called Saliva.)

VanDam's entrance on Friday is greeted with a roar. He extracts five squirming fish from his live well, places them in a large plastic bag, and walks onto the stage as Mercer recaps his record-setting career for the crowd. At the podium stands tournament director Trip Weldon, who looks a little like Mr. Burns from *The Simpsons*. Weldon removes the fish from the bag and places them in a plastic box on the scale, covering them with a lid to keep them from flopping out. Then he announces the result to the crowd. Eleven pounds. The fish are taken backstage and handed off to wildlife officials, who place them back in water; they will return them to the river later that evening. (PETA objects to bass fishing on the grounds that hooks hurt the fish and that removing bass from the water depletes their protective outer coating, but almost all of the fish survive.)

VanDam is in twenty-seventh place, six pounds and thirteen ounces behind the leader, Alabama native Keith Poche. If the standings don't change tomorrow, he won't make the Sunday cutoff. "Today was not the day that I



expected," VanDam tells the crowd. "It was tough out there... I tried to make it happen in a couple of areas and the water just got so dirty with the wind that I couldn't do it."

When VanDam won the 2011 tournament, which was held in the Louisiana Delta, he was in third place after the first day. In 2010, when he won it on Alabama's Lay Lake, he finished the first day on top.

But VanDam tells the crowd he's not out of it yet. "It's supposed to calm down tomorrow," he says. "With this cold weather it may pull some of those fish into some of those ditches and



things where it'll be a little easier to target them."

He's still optimistic, he says. "I feel really good about tomorrow—I learned a lot today," he says.

"That sounds scary to a lot of people," Mercer says into the microphone. And on the floor, the fans I speak with all tell me the same thing—you can't ever count KVD out.

One obvious reason bass fishing is not a more popular spectator sport is that it's almost impossible to follow live, either in person or on television. Privileged members of the media get

spots on the anglers' boats, but even if you're in VanDam's passenger seat, you're missing out on the exploits of the other competitors.

As for television, only eight of the anglers have cameramen on board, and while there's also a helicopter camera, it would be a logistical nightmare to broadcast the event unedited. Unlike when, say, a golfer approaches the tee, there's no telling when the moment of action—landing a fish—will come. So BASS spends a few days working with the footage and airs a much condensed version of the tournament on ESPN2 the weekend after

it takes place, by which point most fans already know the outcome. And as the ratings show, many people simply find watching bass fishing on television boring. You get a few fast-paced moments when a fish is on the line but none of the tactile and meditative pleasures of being on the water.

During the day, while the anglers are on the Red River, most of their fans are at the Shreveport Convention Center, a 350,000-square-foot facility—the second-largest convention center in Louisiana—abutting the Hilton. Inside, the manufacturers behind what the American Sportfishing



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SOLUTION TO THE MARCH PUZZLE

NOTES FOR "TITLE SEARCH":

Puzzle editing by Dan Asimov.

Note: * indicates an anagram.

The title "X Marks the Spot" leads,
as in a treasure map, to the isolated
circled "X."

X	E	N	O	P	H	O	B	E	S	L	A	X
E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E	I	F	O	X	Y
R	O	X	Y	L	E	F	T	M	A	X	I	S
O	T	T	X	U	R	E	W	A	X	E	S	P
S	I	L	E	X	E	S	I	X	O	M	O	O
I	C	P	S	E	X	E	X	E	V	A	S	T
S	P	A	N	D	E	X	T	R	E	N	D	Y
C	O	N	T	E	X	T	X	E	R	X	E	S
O	Z	M	A	X	P	U	B	X	E	N	O	N
W	P	I	X	Y	R	P	R	O	X	I	E	S
P	I	X	E	L	E	L	A	N	E	X	I	T
O	X	I	D	E	S	E	S	P	R	E	X	Y
X	M	A	R	K	S	T	H	E	T	R	I	X

ACROSS: 1. *; 8. two mngs.; 10. ex(er)cise; 12. fo(rev.)-X-(arm)y; 13. hidden; 14. *; 15. Max-is; 17. re-W-axes; 18. s(l-L)exes; 20. O-moo; 23. hidden; 24. homophone; 26. va(S)t; 27. *; 30. tr(end)y; 32. con-text; 34. Xer(O)xes; 35. Oz-ma; 36. B-up, rev.; 38. X-enon (rev.); 40. pi(ano)-xy(lophone); 41. p.(Roxie)s; 43. homophone; 45. elan(d); 46. homophone; 47. ox(h)ides; 48. *; 50. (ma)trix.

DOWN: 1. X-Eros-is; 2. E-xotic*; 3. N-ext; 4. or-yxes(rev.); 5. h(a)i(l)e(d); 6. be(Twix)t; 7. S.F.-a(irport)-X; 8. two mngs.; 9. Ax-is; 11. "I'm-a-X"; 14. homophone; 17. homophone; 19. exult-pets*; 20. ov([h]ere)xert*; 21. ma(n)x; 22. p(l)a(i)n-M(IX-1)a.; 25. (w)e're; 28. homophone, Deck C; 29. two mngs.; 31. (VI)Deo-(Gratias); 32. c(ow!-p[ea]ple)lox; 33. t-axed; 37. bras-(Westc)h(ester); 39. Nix(on)E.R.; 42. homophone; 44. le(a)k.

Association estimates is a \$48 billion industry display their newest products. And it's here, off the river, that I spend my Saturday.

It's a family atmosphere. There's a large pool with targets for kids to practice casting. The grown-ups—and although no female competitors are in the event this year, there are a lot of women in the crowd—are drawn to the hardware on display: Toyota pickups and a seemingly limitless number of boats, motors, rods, and reels.

Many pros who didn't qualify for this year's Classic are shilling for various sponsors, and on Sunday, after the field has been cut in half, several of the vanquished anglers also stop by. With so little prize money to go around, sponsorship deals are the only way for most anglers to survive.

VanDam's formidable \$6 million in tournament winnings—twice that of his nearest rival—amounts to about \$270,000 a year for the twenty-two years he's been fishing professionally. Entry fees for a year of Bassmaster Elite Series tournaments add up to \$43,000. To outfit yourself with a boat, a truck, and gear costs as much as \$90,000, and the best anglers change equipment every year. Travel and accommodation expenses—competitors have to drive to every tournament; you can't stow a boat in an overhead compartment—add another \$30,000 or so.

While VanDam will stay in hotels or rental houses during tour events, many lesser pros cannot afford such an extravagance. Carl Jocumsen, a young Australian angler who was in Shreveport for the weekend but not competing, tells me he often sleeps in the back of his truck when on tour. "Before I came over to the States to try and make it, my friends held a fund-raiser tournament in Australia and raised eighteen thousand dollars," he says. "But that went quickly." He couldn't even afford to buy the truck he's now driving. "I had a shit truck, but thankfully my best friend from Australia, who's a champion motorcyclist, bought me an F-250." Most anglers are fortunate to break even by the end of the year.

"The fishing industry has taken a big hit in this economy, and the year-to-year sponsor contracts are drying up,"

says Kevin Wirth, whose loss of a sponsorship deal with Early Times whiskey contributed to his decision to retire after the 2012 Classic. A former Kentucky Derby jockey, Wirth has been a professional angler for twenty-nine years, with more than \$1.1 million in tournament winnings. But with a family to support, he's decided to leave pro fishing altogether and re-establish his equine-dentistry practice.

In 2002, at ESPN's annual self-promotional awards show, the ESPYs, the network presented VanDam with its inaugural trophy for Best Outdoor Athlete. The previous year, the network had bought BASS for an estimated \$40 million. "This acquisition, together with our expanding commitment to outdoor programming ... could serve as the foundation for the launch of a dedicated ESPN outdoors network," ESPN president George Bodenheimer said at the time.

But it was not to be. In 2002, ESPN's three-day coverage of the Bassmaster Classic drew an average of 296,000 households, a number that has barely budged over the past decade. On November 1, 2010, ESPN unloaded BASS for an undisclosed sum, though it said it would continue to air Classics and other tournaments on ESPN2. The network canceled almost all its other outdoor programming.

ESPN's size was more an obstacle than a boon when it came to attracting money to the sport, believes Don Logan, one of BASS's new owners. "When we go in to talk to somebody about spending money with us and they're a little reluctant, we're not bashful at all about pushing back and doing everything that we can to convince them this is the right thing for them to do." ESPN, on the other hand, was shy about pressuring sponsors—many of whom had multimillion-dollar deals to support the network's other programming—to invest in an operation as small as BASS.

Logan and his two co-investors, Jim Copeland and Jerry McKinnis, say they aren't concerned with expanding the organization at the moment. "We have plenty of paid membership," Logan says. "What we need are more quality members that are going out and increasing awareness of the sport. We need to get

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youth more involved”—this includes, he says, coordinating with college and high school competitions and stepping up BASS’s conservation efforts.

Still, the owners see a possible standard-bearer in VanDam. “I think all sports benefit from having a celebrity—somebody that’s so good that everyone knows their name and thinks they know them personally,” Logan says. “We want [the other anglers] to do well also, but I think they all realize that

Kevin is a great spokesperson for the industry.”

Courtesy buses line up beside the convention hall to shuttle fans to Saturday’s weigh-in at the CenturyLink Center across the river. Some fans come on board with newly purchased rods and reels. More sit down with beers.

The anglers take the stage to weigh the second day’s catch. “I just want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and all of my sponsors,” says Alton Jones, the Texas native and 2008 Classic winner, after weighing in with a formidable seventeen pounds, fourteen ounces.

VanDam’s five fish weigh in at thirteen pounds and fifteen ounces. It’s an improvement on his first day’s bag and enough to qualify him for a third day of fishing, but the gap between VanDam and the leaders has widened. He started the day in the same part of the Red River where he spent much of Friday. But the water had dropped six inches, and the fish were gone, Van Dam says.

He knows he is unlikely to win a third consecutive Classic. “You’re never a hundred percent out of it, but I’m ten pounds back,” he says. “I’ll probably need to catch twenty-five pounds to have a shot at the trophy tomorrow. . . . But if I can’t win, I want to be second, and if not second, third. The fun part is figuring the fish out.”

Other prominent anglers haven’t made the cut. Mike Iaconelli finishes twenty-sixth, one spot from qualifying. Relative unknowns stand atop the leaderboard. On Friday, Greg Vinson’s seventeen-twelve haul put him in second place, and he holds on to that position with a solid finish on day two. But Chris Lane’s nineteen-four bag on Saturday catapults him to the top of the field.

Lane, an Alabaman like Vinson, conforms more closely than VanDam

to the stereotype of a professional bass fisherman. He’s thick around the waist, wears a goatee, and has a Southern accent, as does his brother Bobby, who is also entered in the tournament. Lane enters the arena to “Power-Pole Down,” a country song by Rodney Clawson, commissioned by one of Lane’s sponsors, Power-Pole Shallow Water Anchors. He has been on the BASS tour for six years without seeing much success. “I cashed four or five checks a year, which is about fifty or sixty thousand dollars,” he tells me. “It was enough to just scrape by, barely.” For three of those years, he failed to qualify for the Classic.

Since Lane wasn’t a favorite going into the tournament, there wasn’t a cameraman on board for the first day of ESPN’s coverage. But he’s featured prominently thereafter. On ESPN2 the next weekend, before Lane captures his biggest fish of the tournament on Saturday, he reminisces about his childhood. A twanging slide guitar accompanies the footage.

“As a kid, me and my brothers lay down in front of that TV and watch[ed] Paul Elias and those guys going around taking that circle lap, that victory lap, around there with that American flag in the back of the boat,” Lane says as he casts in a small backwater inlet he has to himself. “Been a dream ever since.”

There’s a flashback to Elias, flanked by his wife and Ray Scott, holding the 1982 Classic trophy. Then it’s back to Lane, who hooks a fish and struggles to pull it into his boat. “This is it,” he says, dragging the fish through the water. He’s breathing heavily. “Don’t you come off,” he implores. He jerks the fish into the boat and screams, pumping his fist. “Pow! Pow, baby! Oh my God!” It looks to be about a five-pounder. Lane is so excited he’s hyperventilating. “Now that, my friends, will get you shaking, buddy,” he tells the camera. Cue a replay of the catch as Lane ponders his next move. “Now, decisions, decisions, decisions. Do I get out of here? If I catch another three- or four-pounder in here, is it gonna help me? Or is this going to be the spot for tomorrow all day?”

In the media center back in Bossier City, I ask VanDam what the Lanes and Vinson will be thinking tonight, heading into the tournament’s final day. “Well, I can’t answer for Greg,

since I don’t know him that well,” he says. “But I’m friends with Chris and Bobby. Knowing them, they’ll have a couple of beers and have a good night’s sleep.”

For a brief moment on Sunday VanDam recaptures the lead. At the final weigh-in, the leaders after day two go last. When VanDam weighs in, he needs fifteen pounds ten ounces to move up to first place. “Fifteen eleven,” announces Mercer, the emcee. VanDam smiles, picks up his two largest fish by the lips, and holds them aloft toward the crowd. Of course, with half of the anglers yet to weigh in, he knows he won’t hold the lead for long.

“I’ve had kind of an up-and-down week,” he tells the crowd. “The last two years at the Classic for me have just been magical . . . I knew it would be hard to make it three in a row. I gave it my best.”

Again most of the anglers thank their sponsors. Indeed, such is the weekend’s general atmosphere of fawning over sponsors that I’m not surprised when one of the musical acts, Brian Schram, who calls himself “The Rockin’ Fisherman,” interrupts his own song to sermonize on the virtues of Mercury outboard motors.

But VanDam, who has more lucrative deals than anyone else, doesn’t mention a sponsor. Instead, he praises the host cities and exhorts the audience to stay until the conclusion of the evening, when the winner takes his victory lap around the arena.

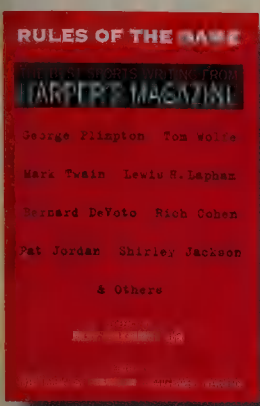
It’s down to Vinson and Lane. After Vinson weighs in at thirteen seven, a confident Lane reaches into his live well and holds a nearly seven-pound bass aloft. It’s placed with his other four fish on the scale as Mercer tells the crowd Lane needs twelve eight to win.

“Fifteen pounds, fourteen ounces,” Mercer yells. Lane leaps into the air with a karate kick, hugs Vinson, and then is nearly tackled by his brother Bobby, who rushes in from the wings.

VanDam, who finishes eleventh, returns to the stage to present the trophy. He hugs Lane, who takes the trophy, bends down on one knee, and points an index finger high above his head.

VanDam heads backstage, but his plea has been heard: as Lane climbs into his boat for his victory lap, the crowd sticks around and cheers. ■

HARPER'S BOOKSHELF



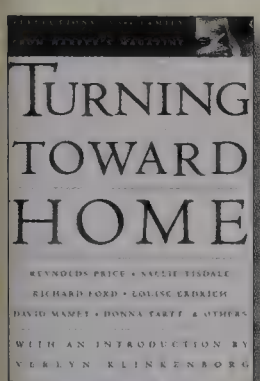
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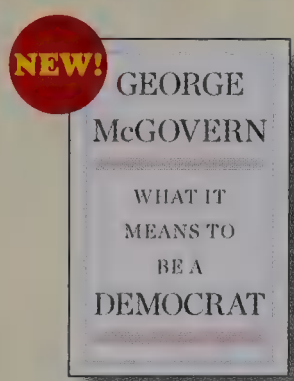
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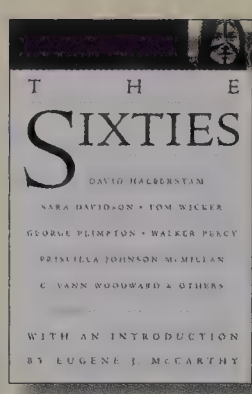
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LIFE DURING WARTIME

Remembering the siege of Sarajevo

By Janine di Giovanni

There was spring rain and pale fog in Sarajevo as my plane approached the city last April, veering over the green foothills of Mount Igman. Through the frosted window I could see the outline of the road we used to call Snipers' Alley, above which Serbian sharpshooters would perch and fire at anyone below. Twenty years had passed since I'd arrived in Sarajevo as a war reporter.

During the siege of the city, most foreign journalists had lived in the Holiday Inn, and it was in that grotty hotel that the man who was to become my husband and the father of my child professed undying love. I met some of my best friends in Sarajevo and lost several others—to alcoholism, drugs, insanity, and suicide. My own sense of compassion and integrity, I think, was shaped during those years.

Since then I had come back many times to report on Bosnia, on the

genocide there, and to try to find people who had gone missing during the war. Now I was returning for a peculiar sort of reunion that would

did? One of us, I think it was Christiane Amanpour, called it "our generation's Vietnam." We were often accused of falling in love with Sarajevo

because it was a European conflict—a war whose victims looked like us, who sat in cafés and loved Philip Roth and Susan Sontag. As reporters, we lived among the people of Sarajevo. We saw the West turn its back and felt helpless.

I had begun my career in journalism covering the First Intifada in the late 1980s. I came to Sarajevo because I wanted to experience firsthand the effect war had on civilians. My father had taught me to stick up for underdogs, to be on the right

side of history. But I had no idea what it would feel like to stare into the open eyes of the recently dead; how to count bodies daily in a morgue; how to talk to a woman whose children had just been killed by shrapnel while they were building a snowman.

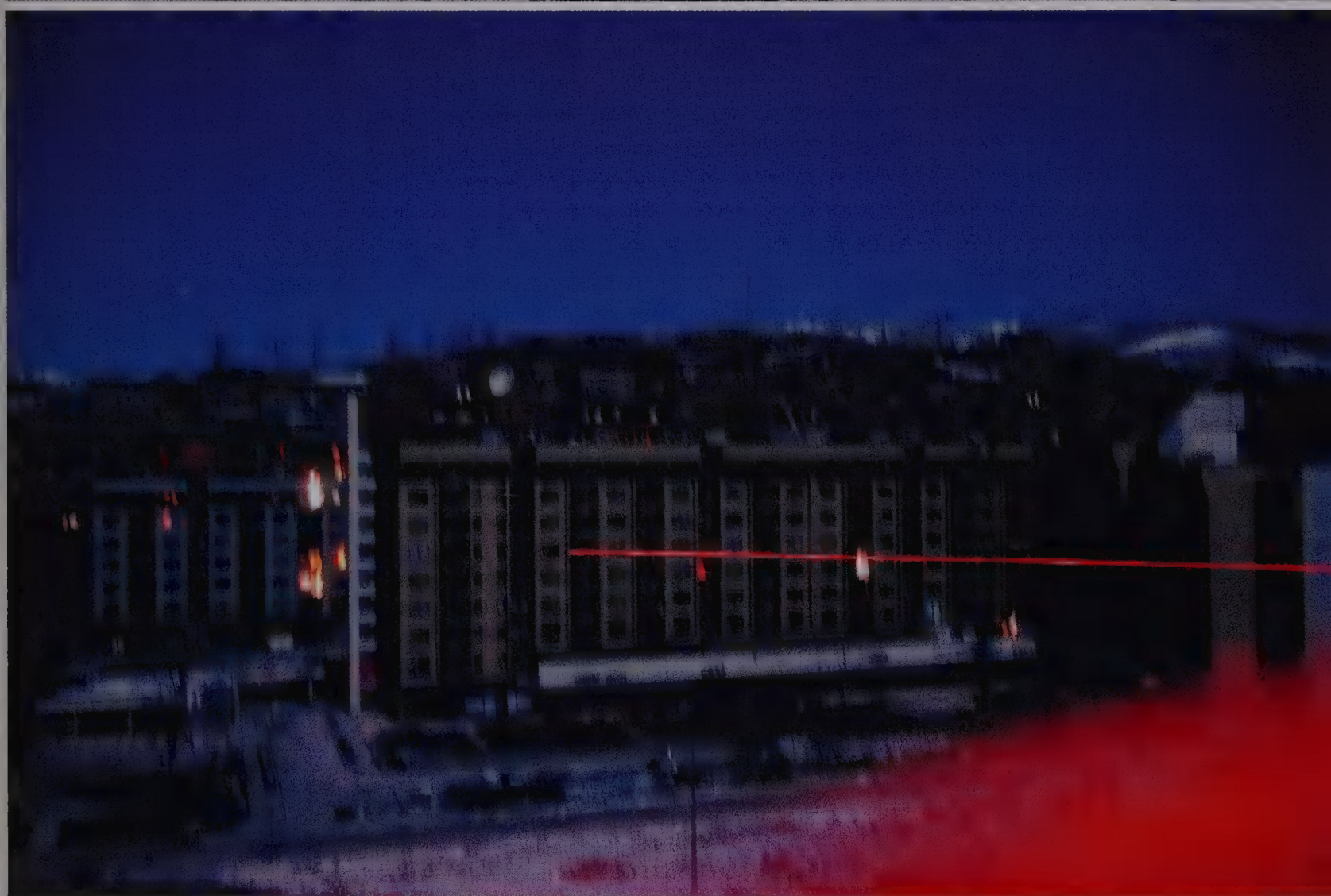
During my first ride into the city from the airport—past a blasted wall on which the words WELCOME TO HELL had been graffitied—it was clear that my wish to see war up close would be granted. I had gotten



bring together reporters, photographers, and aid workers who, for one reason or another, had never forgotten the brutal and protracted siege, which lasted nearly four years. By the end of the war, in 1995, a city once renowned for its multiculturalism and industrial vigor had been reduced to medieval squalor.

Why was it that Sarajevo, and not Rwanda or Congo or Sierra Leone or Chechnya—wars that all of us went on to report—captured us the way this war

Janine di Giovanni has won four major awards for her war reporting and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She is currently writing a book about Syria, to be published by Norton. She lives in Paris.



Top: A gravedigger buries the bodies of civilians killed during the siege, January 1993 © Antoine Gyori/Sygma/Corbis. Bottom: Serbian snipers shooting at Bosnian houses, January 1994 © Jean-Claude Coutausse

a lift from a photographer named Jon Jones, and as we careened down Snipers' Alley toward the city, he told me how many reporters had already been killed, how close the snipers were and how easily they could see us, and about the hundreds of mortar shells that fell on Sarajevo each day. He recounted in detail how a CNN camerawoman had been shot in the jaw, and told me that a bullet could rip through the metal of a car as easily as a needle pierces a piece of cloth.

"Think of being in a doll's house," he said, edging up to a hundred miles per hour on the straightaways. "We're the tiny dolls."

He dropped me off at the Holiday Inn, the only "functioning" hotel in the city, leaving me to lug inside my flak jacket, battery-operated Tandy computer, sleeping bag, and a duffel bag filled with protein bars, antibiotics, a flashlight, batteries, candles, waterproof matches, pens and notebooks, and a pair of silk long johns (which I never took off that entire first winter of the war). I had with me just a single book: a copy of *The Face of War*, by Martha Gellhorn, a journalist who had covered the Spanish Civil War, the Allies' invasion of Normandy, Vietnam, the Six-Day War, and almost every other major conflict of the twentieth century. She settled in Paris in 1930, married a Frenchman, and began to write for *Collier's*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and other publications. In 1936, in a bar in Key West (the Frenchman was long gone), she met Ernest Hemingway, whom she married, and later moved with him to Spain. She was blonde and beautiful and, above all, brave. She was also, as I would later find out, very ill-tempered and often not a "woman's woman."

I had gone to meet Gellhorn in Wales on a hot summer day in 1991, having been sent to interview her about a collection of her novels that was just being published. History had forgotten her to some extent, but she had a loyal cadre, mostly men, who adored her. She drank and smoked, but she had a rare femininity.

That day, I took a train, a bus, then finally hiked over hot fields to

reach Catscradle, her remote cottage. I was keenly aware of my youth and inexperience, and felt embarrassed for all that I had not yet witnessed. She answered the door in tailored slacks with a long cigarette in her hand. She was in her eighties by then and still extremely good-looking. She invited me inside and together we watched the invasion of Slovenia on television while she made astute comments about the coming destruction of Yugoslavia. I listened intently, but, as she made clear, she had no interest in taking on a protégée.

"I hope you're not expecting lunch," she said rather sharply. She did bring me a glass of ice water, and had laid out a guest towel in her upstairs bathroom for me to use. But that was the limit of her hospitality and, by implication, her professional encouragement.

A few weeks later, I got a letter from her scolding me for having made mistakes in my article. I had reported that the light in the room was strong, when in fact it had been rather weak. What infuriated her most was that I had mentioned she had once been Hemingway's wife. You violated the rule of journalism, she wrote. You lied.

Some years later, shortly before she died (her close friends believed it was suicide), we served together on a panel about war reporting for Freedom House, and she called me "dear girl," and embraced me affectionately. By then, I had reported on many sieges and many wars. Someone took a photograph of us together, both speaking animatedly, our faces captured in heated emotion.

In the lobby of the Holiday Inn, I looked around and tried to be brave. To my surprise, there was an ordinary, if dark, reception area with cubbyholes for passports presided over by a rather elegant bespectacled man who took my documents, registered them, and handed me the keys to a room on the fourth floor.

"There's no elevator," he said matter-of-factly, "since there's no electricity. Take the stairs there." He gestured toward a cavernous hallway and told me the hours of the communal

meals, which were served in a makeshift dining room lit by candles.

"And please, madame, don't walk on this side of the building." He pointed to a wall, through which you could see the sky and buildings outside, that looked as though a truck had run into it. "And don't go up on the seventh floor," he added cryptically. The seventh floor, I soon learned, was where the Bosnian snipers defending the city were positioned. And the forbidden side of the building faced the Serbian snipers and mortar emplacements. If you emerged from the hotel on that side and a sniper had you in his range, you got shot.

Walking into the dining room that first night, I felt I had made a terrible mistake. I knew no one in Sarajevo, it was a few weeks before Christmas, and it was bitterly cold. I had not seen the photographer since he'd dumped me at the hotel (declaring, in passing, that he hated all writers). Perhaps, I thought, staring at the blown-out windows and mortar-cracked walls, I should stay a few days and go home.

Around me, I heard many languages: Dutch, Flemish, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, as well as Serbo-Croatian (which is now often referred to as three separate but nearly identical tongues: Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian). The huge room was full of grizzled reporters, everyone looking slightly dazed—a combination of exhaustion, hang-over, and shock. In the distance I heard machine-gun fire and a mortar shell dropping somewhere in the city. No one paid attention to the noise, or to a newcomer like me.

But I soon encountered warmth and even fierce camaraderie. Over dinner—a plate of rice and canned meat from a humanitarian-aid box—an American cameraman of Armenian descent named Yervant Der Parthogh told me about the toilets. "Find an empty room and follow your nose," he said, passing me a bottle of Tabasco sauce, standard issue in war zones, where the bland diet of rice cried out for a little seasoning. (ABC, the BBC, and other TV-news organizations bought the condiment in bulk, and it was often shared.)

What exactly did he mean about the toilets? Yervan explained that certain rooms were always vacant, since their walls had been partially blown away, exposing the interior to sniper fire. But in the attached bathrooms, the toilets remained—unflushable, full, and stinking. “Find one and make it your own,” he advised.

The window in my room had been destroyed by a rocket and replaced with plastic by the U.N.’s refugee agency. The shelling was continuous. I unpacked my gear, propped my flashlight against a cup, brushed my teeth with the mineral water I had brought from Zagreb, laid out the St. Jude medallion my mother had given me, and unrolled my sleeping bag on top of an orange polyester blanket left over from the glory days of 1984, when Sarajevo was an Olympic city and the gruesome Soviet-style structure of the Holiday Inn had been built.

As I discovered the next day, the press corps consisted of a bunch of men with cameras or notebooks in a standard uniform: jeans, Timberland boots, and ugly zip-front fluorescent fleeces. The sole exception was a tall, thin Frenchman named Paul Marchand, a radio reporter, whose outfit consisted of a pressed white shirt, creased black trousers, and shiny dress shoes.

There were, I was relieved to see, other women. I recognized Amanpour, young, glamorous, and more visible than ever after her coverage two years earlier of the Gulf War. I also encountered a few French female reporters, all of whom violated the masculine dress code: a reporter from *Le Parisien* who wore cashmere sweaters; the petite radio reporter Ariane Quentier, who favored a Russian fur hat; and Alexandra Boulat, a photographer with a mane of long blond hair (she died after suffering a brain aneurysm in Ramallah, in 2007, at the age of forty-five).

I also met Kurt Schork, who had a room near mine on the fourth floor. He was a legendary Reuters correspondent who had become a war reporter at the age of forty after working for New York City’s Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

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Schork brought me to the Reuters office and showed me how to file my copy on a satellite phone for fifty dollars a minute. There was a generator in the next room, which reeked of gasoline, and if it was running, one dialed the London office, then read the copy to a distant, frenetic typist, spelling out all the Serbo-Croatian words. It was very World War II. Carrier pigeons would have been faster.

Over the next few weeks, Schork patiently told me where and where not to go. He showed me how to rig up a hose as a kind of makeshift shower. On Christmas Eve, we went to midnight mass together at St. Josip's Catholic church on Snipers' Alley (though not at midnight, since that would have been an invitation to the Serbs to shell us); Christian soldiers, who made up perhaps a quarter of Bosnia's largely Muslim defense force, came down from the front line at the outskirts of the city to receive communion.

Room 437 would be my home, on and off, for the next three years: the mangy orange blanket, the plywood desk with cigarette burns, the empty minibar, the telephone on the bedside table that never rang because the lines were cut. And through the plastic sheeting of my window, I had a view of the city, with its 35,000 destroyed buildings and its courageous populace that refused to bend to its oppressors.

The 2012 reunion in Sarajevo was to take place over the first week of April, Holy Week. This had some resonance for me, since during the siege I often went to mass with other Catholic reporters in the battered Catholic church. It had given me solace, and seeing the old ladies bent over their rosary beads reassured me in some way that wherever I went in the world I could find a common community bound by religion.

Shortly after I arrived for the reunion, I ran into Emma Daly, who had been a reporter for the *British Independent* during the war and now worked for Human Rights Watch. She had married the war photographer Santiago Lyon, now a senior AP boss, and was the moth-

er of two children. In those days, I don't think either one of us projected much into the future or could have imagined ourselves married, with children, living more or less normal lives.

"Have you seen the chairs yet?" she asked.

Emma explained that a kind of temporary memorial had been set up on Marshal Tito Street, in the center of the city: 11,541 empty red chairs, one for every resident killed during the siege. Walking downtown, we approached the Presidency Building, where we had risked sniper fire and stray mortar rounds during the war to interview President Alija Izetbegović or Vice President Ejup Ganić, who always let journalists into his office and sometimes offered us hot coffee. "If you're brave enough to come to this building," Ganić once told me, "then I am going to talk to you."

The rows of red chairs, some of them scaled down to represent children, stretched far into the distance. Later there would be some grumbling over the fact that the chairs had been made in a Serbian factory. Yet the amount of destruction they represented was overwhelming—every one of these people might still be alive if a sniper had failed to pull the trigger, if a mortar shell had landed twenty feet to the east or west.

That night, at the refurbished Holiday Inn, we all got horribly drunk. Then we started taking group pictures. All of us were a little rounder in the face, the men with less hair and bigger bellies. The women, though, looked remarkably good.

The Holiday Inn now offers Wi-Fi, working toilets, a few restaurants (the food still bad), and clean sheets. We gathered in the bar, a group of veteran reporters and photographers who hadn't seen one another in twenty years. There was Morten Hvaal, a Norwegian photographer who once had driven me around the city in the AP's armored car, pointing out landmarks; Shane ("Shaney") McDonald, an Australian cameraman who had sat in my room one night with Keith "Chuck" Tayman and Robbie Wright, watching falling stars from an open win-

dow; and there, in a corner, Jon Jones, the photographer who had scared me so on my first ride from the airport. Now he was nice. We had all grown up.

But some people were missing from the Holiday Inn lounge where we had spent years living on whiskey, cigarettes, and chocolate bars. Shouldn't Kurt Schork have been sitting on a barstool, drinking a cranberry juice? Kurt was killed by rebel soldiers in Sierra Leone in May 2000, the morning after we ate dinner together in a restaurant overlooking the sea. And where was Paul Marchand, with his black shoes and white shirt? (He had once called me in the middle of the night to shout, "The water is running and she is hot!") After the war he wrote novels, started drinking, and, one night in 2009, hanged himself. Juan Carlos Gumucio was gone, too. A bear of a man—and the second husband of *Sunday Times* reporter Marie Colvin, also gone, killed in Homs, Syria, in February 2012—he had introduced himself to me in central Bosnia by exclaiming, "Call me JC! Like Jesus Christ. Or like King Juan Carlos." We used to go to Sunday mass together in Sarajevo—and in London too, but then out afterward for bloody marys. In 2002 he shot himself in the heart after, in Colvin's words, "seeing too much war." I was in Somalia at the time, on a hotel rooftop, and someone phoned to tell me. There were gunshots all around me, and over that din I began to cry for my friend.

The morning after our reunion, we all had hangovers. Gradually, we pulled ourselves together, and shortly after noon, we went to a vineyard owned by a local former employee of the AP. There we spent the afternoon drinking wine and looking out over the hills at Sarajevo. It was almost unthinkable, but we were sipping wine and eating slow-cooked lamb in the exact spot where snipers had set up twenty years before.

Our return to our homes in Auckland, Beirut, Boston, London, Milan, New York, Nicosia, Paris, and Vienna was followed by a flurry

of comradely emails and pictures posted on Facebook. There was much talk of getting together again, which we all knew would never happen. Then we all plunged into depression. A few days later I received a letter from Edward Serotta, who had gone to Sarajevo to document its Jewish population during the Bosnian war and now works in Vienna reconstructing family histories that were lost during the Holocaust. Serotta said that he remembered coming back to his Berlin apartment after weeks in Sarajevo and putting on a pair of trousers that slid off him. At first he thought they belonged to someone else. Then he realized that they were his—and that he was still himself—but physically and emotionally, he was not the same person who first went to Sarajevo.

Serotta told me he remembered a night he walked through the city, in November 1993, thinking, "If mankind is going to destroy itself, I feel honored and privileged to be here to see how it is done."

After I put his letter away, I gathered up all my Sarajevo mementos—the tiny bits of shrapnel, a photograph of me and Ariane in helmets on the front line, a copper coffee pot, a love note that Bruno, my husband, had left me in Room 437 after our first meeting, his English then imperfect: "I won't lose you."

At the airport, a group of us had gathered for coffee: Serotta; the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Roy Gutman; Ariane; Peter Kessler (a U.N. refugee worker) and his wife, Lisa; and Anna Cataldi, an Italian writer and U.N. ambassador. Ariane and I soon boarded the plane to Paris, and she—always the astute little reporter in the fur hat—caught my mood.

"Don't be sad," she said. "There are many places to go." She fiddled with her handbag and read *Paris Match*.

But I was sad. My experience in Sarajevo was the last time I thought I could change something. The city was passing below my eyes from the plane window, forever broken, resting on a long flowing river. ■

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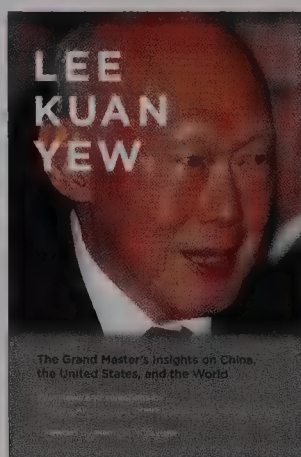
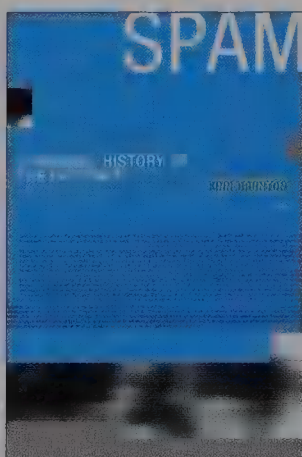
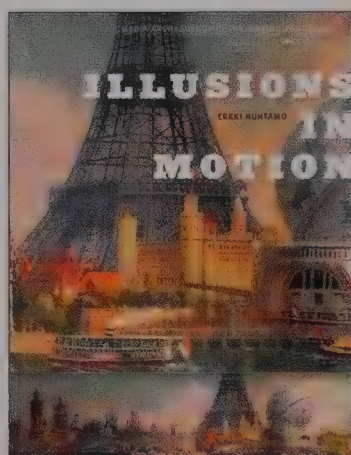
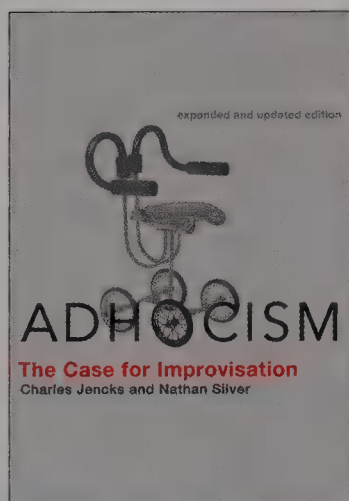
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David E. Nye

From the Model T to today's "lean manufacturing": the assembly line as a crucial, yet controversial, agent of social and economic transformation.



NEW BOOKS

By Tom Bissell

Some of the most interesting minds at work in the American arts today can be found in the video-game industry. Such designers as Jonathan Blow, Jenova Chen, Clint Hocking, Ken Levine, Jason Rohrer,

ty years. His ingenious first book, *Soon I Will Be Invincible*, depicted a world filled with superheroes and villains, but its integument was that of a psychologically observant literary novel. With *You*, Grossman is, once again, crossing

pany's next title. His thoughts on making and playing games ("we had all the problems of shooting a movie while simultaneously inventing a completely new kind of movie camera and writing the story for a bunch of actors who weren't even going to follow the script") form the core of *You*, giving Grossman the occasion for some of the most startling, acute writing on video games yet essayed.

As a piece of straight-up fiction, however, *You* is not always successful. Video-game characters, Grossman



and Kellee Santiago all aspire to an imaginative excellence most novelists, visual artists, and filmmakers would recognize instantly. But whereas most people have a ballpark conception of what it means to be a film director or a painter, hardly anyone can tell you the first thing about what it's like to make a video game.

Austin Grossman attempts to remedy this with his second novel, *YOU* (Mulholland Books, \$25.99, mulhollandbooks.com), which concerns a (fictional) middling 1990s video-game company called Black Arts. This is familiar territory for Grossman, who has worked in and out of the games industry for the past twen-

the streams of his putatively adolescent and adult fascinations.

Desperate for a career do-over, Russell, the narrator, comes to work at Black Arts as a twenty-eight-year-old failed journalist. (Two of Russell's childhood friends founded the company.) Grossman was born in 1969, the same year as his narrator, which allows him to write evocatively about the "floods of quarters warmed with adolescent body heat" and the sense all young gamers had of being "dimly aware that we were the first people, ever, to be doing these things."

After only a few weeks at Black Arts, Russell is unexpectedly promoted to lead game designer for the com-

writes, are "paper-thin, just empty things you steered around the world to get what you want," and this seems dismayingly applicable to some of the people we meet in the novel. Russell's blandness as a character may be inevitable (he spends most of the book sitting in front of a computer screen, after all), but the people who drift into his orbit also tend to be types of a single—and not particularly memorable—note. Thus when the emptily iconic characters from Black Arts' story lines begin to invade Russell's dreams and give him advice, you pay attention. That a wizard rendered in pixels upstages characters of ostensible flesh and blood is either Grossman's sly

commentary on games or his unwise surrender to them.

You's plot turns on a piece of baleful code implanted deep within the engine that powers all of Black Arts' games; how this bit of digital malevolence embodies itself, and what it does, is both upsetting and amusing, as is Russell's half-ridiculous, half-profound, and highly Platonic explanation of why any of us play video games in the first place:

To forestall any future threat, the gods decreed we should each be separated into halves, and each half hurled into a separate dimension. There was a human half, weak but endowed with thought and feeling, and a video game half, with glowing and immortal bodies that were mere empty shells, lacking wills of their own. We became a fallen race, and forgot our origins, but something in us longed to be whole again. And so we invented the video game, the apparatus that bridged the realms and joined us with our other selves again.

Everything in Austin Grossman's novel feels urgently defined by our digital era. Benjamin Lytal's debut novel *A MAP OF TULSA* (Penguin, \$15, penguin.com), conversely, could have been written twenty—even fifty—years ago. Its first and second halves take place during the Clinton and Bush Administrations, respectively, and contain several mentions of email; beyond that, the novel's concerns seem curiously unstuck in time.

Lytal's narrator, Jim, is an aspiring poet. He's back home for the summer, after his freshman year at an elite (presumably Ivy League) college. He's returned to Tulsa to prove to himself "that it was empty." What he finds instead is a young woman named Adrienne Booker: high school dropout, heir to the Booker Petroleum fortune, diligent painter, and resident of a skyscraper penthouse. Jim and Adrienne's relationship begins with some mild drug use and frottage before lurching into a creepily detailed ménage à trois, at which point the novel begins to shake and rumble like a small, unexpectedly powerful volcano.

A "clearly aristocratic" young woman like Adrienne, "a blond genius with long legs and a paintbrush," is bound

to compel the average reader to wonder whether she is encountering a plausible character or rather stepping into some exotic game preserve. This is probably why Lytal brings Adrienne down to earth with a broken nose and no great knowledge of painting; why, during a painful scene in which Jim introduces her to his schoolteacher parents, he has the private wish that Adrienne were more "explosively beautiful." She senses Jim's disappointment and chastises him for it on the way home: "You acted like you were ashamed of me." He is, of course. Intelligent but unschooled, sociable but self-centered, Adrienne is, for Jim, an explicit repudiation of his careful life, with its "special little record of achievement."

That young Americans love the wrong people hard and recklessly is no one's idea of news, but it's not the *what* of this novel—of any fine novel—that stays with you. Begin with the prose. A novel written in the voice of a purported poet had better be fortified with luxurious images, and *A Map of Tulsa* prodigally provides them. Jim sees a city skyline as "battleships, bristling with darkness," and likens an English saddle to a "strenuous black tongue." Lytal is brilliant on how intimacy feels ("To be in the same warm bed with her was like a lightbulb turned on in my stomach") and at conveying sensory information. For instance, inside a parking garage, "there was a drip someplace, far away, all around us"—ten words, none of which is "echo," and yet how gorgeously he evokes that drip's hollow, echoey plink. Lytal is equally skilled at putting together broken-hearted aphorisms: "An ex-girlfriend, by definition, is a memory improperly possessed."

A Map of Tulsa deserves comparison with the very best novels of its kind, from James Salter's *A Sport and a Pastime* to Scott Spencer's *Endless Love*. It's also one of the most insightful books about the comforts (and traps) of small-city parochialism I've ever read.

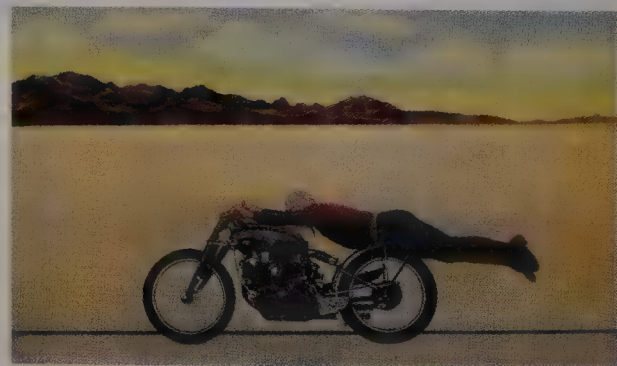
I could not take an interest in motorcycles, the art world, or Italian radicalism if I were paid to in large, recurring installments, but

Rachel Kushner's second novel, *THE FLAMETHROWERS* (Scribner, \$26.99, simonandschuster.com), which is about motorcycles, the art world, and Italian radicalism, has made me care about these things deeply. The power of fiction is not so different from what Austin Grossman believes to be central to the experience of video games: the sudden sense you get that you've been cleaved from some calamitously lost other half. Seeing the world through another's eyes, you are restored to what feels like full sight, and full thought, once again.

Here is the kind of book that reminds you how emotionally refurbishing fiction can be, the kind of book whose prose makes you see the world ... well, hold on. There is, of course, a passage in *The Flamethrowers* that demonstrates what reading *The Flamethrowers* feels like. "We'd eaten the lotus paste buns on a cold, damp November day," Kushner's narrator, Reno, says of a late-1970s excursion into New York City's Chinatown,

on which the sun shone and the rain fell simultaneously, the strange, rosy-gold light of this contradiction intensifying the colors around us as we walked, the fruits and vegetables in vendors' bins, green bok choy, smooth, sunset-colored mangoes packed into cases, the huge, spiny durian fruits in their nets, crushed ice tinged with fish blood.

Life, gazed at with exemplary intensity over hundreds of pages and thousands of sentences precision-etched with detail—that's what *The Flamethrowers* feels like. That's what it is. And it could scarcely be better.



The Flamethrowers is a political novel, a feminist novel, a philosophical novel, a sexy novel, and a kind of

thriller in which most of the intrigue occurs opaquely offstage. Reno (so named for the city of her birth) is fluent and convincing, even though she spends much of the novel listening to other people (artists, mostly; men, mostly) bloviate and editorialize at nauseating—but never uninteresting—length. *The Flamethrowers* in many ways resembles Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*: both narrated by an uncommonly eloquent protagonist whom no one can quite hear, both determined to explore where a desire for social justice turns dark and gnarled, both seemingly allegorical and vaguely dreamlike yet always densely realistic and utterly persuasive in their particulars. "Making art was really about the problem of the soul, of losing it," one of Kushner's characters thinks, toward the end of the book. "It was a technique for inhabiting the world."

This is exactly what Kushner does. Primarily the story of a love affair between Reno, a young artist, and Sandro, the ashamed heir to a powerful Italian rubber company with *fascista* ties (Sandro is also almost twice Reno's age), *The Flamethrowers* has a fearless experiential and geographic promiscuity, traveling from the mind of a motorcyclist about to crash on the Utah salt flats ("In an accident everything is simultaneous, sudden, irreversible. It means this: no going back") to a hideous artists' dinner in Downtown Manhattan ("Helen's face had gone blank, as if she'd been summoned elsewhere but had left an impassive mask behind, for his self-promotion to bounce off") to a Roman riot ("I had fallen through a hole and landed in a massive crowd of strangers, this stream of faces, a pointillism of them") and to the night of the 1977 New York City blackout ("The vehicles passing through Times Square were the only light sources, except for the prostitutes who had flashlights, which they swung around, calling from doorways, It's good in the dark"). Virtually every page contains a paragraph that merits—and rewards—rereading. Occasionally the book feels too long, a little ungainly; but then you read one of Kushner's thunderclap sentences and you remember that sometimes, in fiction, hearing the thunder means standing for a little while in the rain. ■

TIME'S CURRENT

The autumnal works of James Salter

By Jonathan Dee

Discussed in this essay:

All That Is, by James Salter. Knopf. 304 pages. \$26.95. knopfdoubleday.com.



James Salter's 1975 novel *Light Years* is a sensuously written account of time's fracture of a happy marriage. As the book approaches its mournful end—Nedra and Viri Berland long separated, their home sold, their children grown, their physicality diminished—the erstwhile spouses' thoughts turn increasingly toward preparations for death. Their movements are sad and slow, their thoughts elegiac. One morning Viri surprises his ex-wife with a phone call, and after some small talk, their conversation becomes philosophical:

"We're entering the underground

Jonathan Dee's novel *A Thousand Pardons* was published in March by Random House. His last article for Harper's Magazine, "The Pretender," appeared in the September 2011 issue.

river," she said. "Do you know what I mean?"

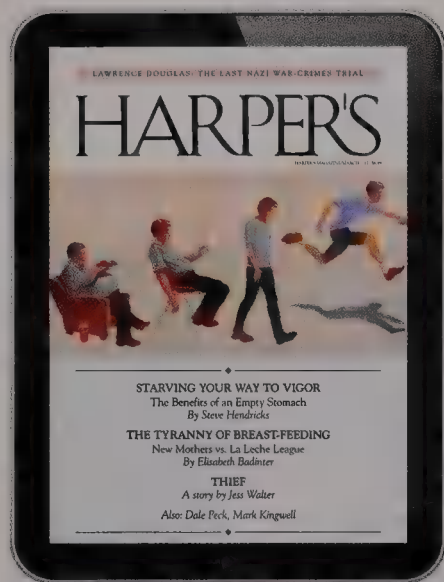
"Yes, I know."

"It's ahead of us. All I can tell you is, not even courage will help." ...

The underground river. The ceiling lowers, grows wet, the water rushes into darkness. The air becomes damp and icy, the passage narrows. Light is lost here, sound; the current begins to flow beneath great, impassable slabs.

What's most remarkable about this conversation is that it takes place between two people who are forty-three years old. They are preparing to disappear meekly into the underworld not because they are ill but simply because they are past their dominant, attractive peak, like greyhounds who have lost a step. Reading *Light Years* for the first time at age twenty-five, I didn't bat an

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 M A G A Z I N E

eye at this. It's a little more consternating now.

That Salter has just produced a new novel, titled *All That Is*, at eighty-seven, comes as something of a surprise, less because of his age than because it has been thirty-four years since his last one, *Solo Faces* (though he has published several books of short fiction and non-fiction, a couple of them excellent, in that long interim). It's hard not to recall poor Nedra and Viri, whose lives were, actuarially speaking, maybe less than half over. The characters around whom Salter builds his fictions have tended, like the Berlands, to lead lives that resemble the careers of athletes: a luminous few years at the apex of their powers, after which they either die young or fade into a sort of tactful exile, away from our sight and our approbation. No one has written more beautifully than Salter about youth and virility, about physical courage, about what it feels like to be in virtuous command of one's world, about tremendous, symphonic, phenomenally stylized sex. An aspect of the new novel's drama, then, lies in whether and how the author might choose to engage a realm of experience that he and his characters once seemed to find unimaginable.

All *That Is* does something that Salter's earlier novels labored not to do: it attaches itself explicitly to the historical and cultural particulars of one place and time, namely New York City and its social environs during the second half of the twentieth century. It opens, briefly, during the Second World War, when a naval lieutenant named Philip Bowman takes part in the brutally climactic invasion of Okinawa; despite references to some of the practical and emotional hardships of Bowman's childhood (when he was two, his father abandoned the family), it's clear that both to Bowman and to Salter the war was effectively the moment of his birth. After the armistice, and a stint at Harvard, Bowman comes to New York and takes a job at a literary publishing house called Braden and Baum. He meets a woman—an old-

money Virginian named Vivian—in a bar and marries her, though the marriage isn't cut out to last. Bowman becomes a full-fledged editor at Braden and Baum; travels periodically on business to London, where he begins an extended affair; buys himself a modest house in the Hamptons; and before long—really, it only seems like “before long,” for time in the novel is racing by—he is forty-five and “on good terms with life.” The underground river is nowhere in sight.

Bowman has a lot in common with other Salter heroes. His success rate with women is DiMaggian. He is not wealthy but never seems to count his money either; his work (like that of *Light Years'* Viri, an architect) is less important for its quotidian details than for what it signifies about his values. Like his creator, Bowman prizes the world of books above all else and considers authors to be engaged in a battle, heroic no matter the outcome, with time itself.

With the important exception of those in *A Sport and a Pastime*, Salter's characters struggle less to overcome their flaws than to satisfy their desire for virtue. Where one might say that most artists' aim is to interrogate tradition, Salter's is to find, in a narcissistic and distracted world, authentic ways to honor it. “What do you mean,” an interviewer asked him in 1993, “when you say that there's a right way to live? Do you mean to be discovered by each of us?” No, Salter replied, “that would be too chaotic. I'm referring to the classical, to the ancient, the cultural agreement that there are certain virtues and that these virtues are untarnishable.” Philip Bowman is possessed of these traditional virtues, one of which, crucially, is a sense of quiet reserve about the virtues themselves: he does not espouse them, because that is the opposite of embodying them. As important as his wartime experience is to him, Bowman doesn't tell stories about it unless pressed. You do not transform experience; experience transforms you. (Salter himself is a West Point grad who served a half dozen years as an Air Force combat pilot; his first two novels

drew on that experience, but his fiction has been circumspect on the subject since.)

But if there is an aspect of human experience with which Salter's work is most commonly associated, it would have to be sex. He has long had a richly deserved reputation as someone who writes about sex (of the hetero variety) with extraordinary brio. A Salter sex scene—always savvily short—is a remarkable union of high and low, of frankness and rhetorical conceit:

The sky is pale and drained of heat. In this silence like folded flags, Dean's awareness of things seems extraordinary. He puts his prick into her slowly, guiding it with his hand. It sinks like an iron bar into water. Her eyes close. Her voice is cut adrift.

You sometimes find yourself laughing at these passages—not derisively, but in the way you might laugh at seeing an outrageous trick performed successfully. Bowman's life affords copious opportunities for such writing, and it is a pleasure to report that, at age eighty-seven, Salter can still bring it:

In bed he lay spent, like a soldier at the end of leave, and she was riding him like a horse, her hair blinding her . . . Her buttocks were glorious, it was like being in a bakery, and when she cried out it was like a dying woman, one who had crawled to a shrine.

(The bakery, in terms of sheer figurative inventiveness, may not quite rise to the level of *A Sport and a Pastime's* "they were fucking like weight lifters"—a simile about which dissertations could be written—but it is still pretty insolent stuff.)

There has always been a tension in Salter's work between the masculine and the feminine—or perhaps "tension" is the wrong term: usually it's more of a peaceful segregation. This rift is often, and I think mistakenly, extended past questions of content to assessments of Salter's style. The conspicuous lushness of his prose is presumed to offer some sort of feminine contrast to the virility of his worldview, an old trope that has roots in Hemingway: on the page,

masculinity equals reserve. Spare prose is "muscular" prose.

Salter's prose, though, is both tightly economical and highly, even outrageously, stylized—and not in the direction of the vernacular, as with many of his generational peers, but toward the pole of poetry. There is a Salter line, the way there is a Whitman line or a Berryman line. In prose we tend to associate beautifully crafted sentences with length, but Salter's line is short:

Autun, still as a churchyard. Tile roofs, dark with moss. The amphitheatre. The great, central square: the Champ de Mars. Now, in the blue of autumn, it reappears, this old town, provincial autumn that touches the bone. The summer has ended. The garden withers. The mornings become chill. I am thirty, I am thirty-four—the years turn dry as leaves.

Short but incantatory, all iambs and dactyls. He is unafraid of meter, unafraid even of interior rhyme, of which there is a lot in his work. (Few authors would have let stand the final words of *A Sport and a Pastime*: "deep in the life we all agree is so greatly to be desired.") The punctuation is not fussy—there are plenty of incomplete sentences, and plenty of comma splices—but the really noteworthy absence is that of conjunctions. And this tends to layer the clauses rather than sequence them, to let them generate a rhythm:

The seasons became her shelter, her raiment. She bent to them, she was like the earth, she ripened, grew sere, in the winter she wrapped herself in a long sheepskin coat. She had time to waste, she cooked, made flowers, she saw her daughter stricken by a young man.

This internal layering corresponds to a knack for layering the sentences themselves—for uncoupling them, making them nonconsecutive, not only in terms of chronology but also in point of view. Often it is as if the narrative voice is operating at several removes at once. From *Light Years*:

He had a drink at the bar, where people entered with cries of greeting to the bartender. In the corridor were

With all the money
she'd saved at
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Inez could afford
to make her home
a little greener



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women of fifty, dressed for dinner, their cheeks rouged. Two of them sat near him. While one talked, the other ate long, triangular bread and butter pieces, two bites to each. He read the menu and a poem of Verlaine's on the back. The consommé arrived. It was nine-thirty. He was sailing to Europe. Beneath him as he lifted his spoon, fish were gliding black as ice in a midnight sea. The keel crossed over them like a comb of thunder.

From "Am Strande von Tanger":

She has small breasts and large nipples. Also, as she herself says, a rather large behind. Her father has three secretaries. Hamburg is close to the sea.

The genius of all this, as it pertains to narrative, is that as carefully and conspicuously worked as they are, Salter's sentences also read like notes: run-ons, fragments, lists. They are never sloppy or improvisational, but they have a real-time nature, conveying the emotional urgency of experience not as it is recalled but as it is felt:

She tried to play a game, she wasn't lying near the ditch, she was in another place, in all the places, on Eleventh Street in that first apartment above the big skylight of the restaurant, the morning in Sausalito with the maid knocking on the door and Henry trying to call in Spanish, not now, not now! And postcards on the marble of the dresser and things they'd bought.

That familiar Salter music is still there in the lines of *All That Is*, though less brazenly so. The wave-like rhythms recur, but overall the prose seems a little simpler, more austere. It's neither better nor worse than the earlier, more baroque stylings of *Light Years* or *A Sport and a Pastime* or the stories in *Dusk*, but rather the product, one feels, of an older, sparer sensibility:

It had been a long day. The summer had come early. Sun struck the trees of the countryside with dazzling power. In towns along the way, girls with tanned limbs strolled idly past stores that seemed closed. Housewives drove with kerchiefs on their heads and their men in hard yellow hats stood near signs warning Construction

Ahead. The landscape was beautiful but passive. The emptiness of things rose like the sound of a choir making the sky bluer and more vast.

This new sensibility enfolds the characters as well. Though Bowman, unlike his predecessors, commands our attention into middle age and beyond—though he continues, past what one might call his aesthetic prime, to live and feel and succeed—his hold on those successes becomes, in an inexorable, almost animal way, more tenuous. He is well into his fifties when he meets in an airport cab a young mother named Christine, some twenty years his junior, with whom he begins an affair. They move in together. He is euphoric. But she winds up falling in love with a more age-appropriate man (a Hamptons contractor, no less) and taking Philip to court in an effort to wrest their house away from him.

His heart is shattered—far more so than it was by his wife's leaving him, which he seemed to take with equanimity—despite which he cannot bring himself to regret anything: "It would be better never to have known her, but what sense did that make? It had been the luckiest day of his life." But he, and the novel, are not done with her. Twenty pages later, in a subway station, Philip runs into Christine's daughter Anet, now a college student, and not only effortlessly seduces her too but exacts through her an extraordinary revenge on her mother—the more extraordinary for Bowman's own assessment that it is not revenge at all.

This incident happens somewhat late in the book, and under other circumstances I might refrain from giving even that much away; but this is a Salter novel, and so one might as well acknowledge that at its weakest it has the dramaturgical sense of pornography: if a door opens with our hero on one side of it and an attractive new female character on the other, there is only one direction that scene is going to go. It's fair, if unproductive, to call Salter out as a bit of a sexist, though a sexist of the familiar sort who would likely protest that, on the contrary, he worships

women. To him there is really only one drama in the life of a woman, and that is the drama of losing her looks. One minor character (a man) in *All That Is* actually commits suicide in despair over it. It's a mind-set that seems less mean-spirited than old-fashioned, which, while perhaps not excusing anything, raises the question of how well Salter's work itself is likely to age.

To paraphrase Milan Kundera, there is such a thing as the history of the novel, but most novels exist comfortably outside it. One imagines Salter would have no trouble getting his arms around this proposition, for his own inspirations are idiosyncratic and seemingly oblivious to time or genre: Saint-Exupéry, Lorca, Pound. Socially (as his marvelous memoir *Burning the Days* makes apparent) he may have been at home in the white male literary mainstream of the Sixties and Seventies, but his work has always seemed wonderfully and justifiably unconscious of itself as part of any movement or group or generation. He has resisted, to the extent that one is in control of such things, being representative of his time.

But for all that is (and aspires to be) timeless in Salter's writing, there are aspects of it that seem, to a contemporary eye, outmoded or worse. Through his work runs a difficult strain of snobbery—usually more to do with appearance than with class, though it is sometimes hard to tell the difference. ("He liked brandy, crystal glasses, vermouth cassis at the Century. His life was solid, well-made, perhaps not happy but comfortable.") Everyone in his fictional circle is good-looking and sophisticated and reasonably well off, everyone travels extensively but only to Europe (though Salter himself, mostly in connection with his Air Force career, has been all over the world). There is a great respect for social standing, for heritage. At times it approaches comedy; when, in *All That Is*, one of Philip's paramours gets a dog, it isn't just any dog, but one with a name and a bloodline, sired by "a dog with a decent record." Other instances, though, are more troubling, as in the final sentence of the short story "American Express":

A young man in a cap suddenly came out of a doorway below. He crossed the driveway and jumped onto a motorbike. The engine started, a faint blur. The headlight appeared and off he went, delivery basket in back. He was going to get the rolls for breakfast. His life was simple. The air was pure and cool. He was part of that great, unchanging order of those who live by wages, whose world is unlit and who do not realize what is above.

And there are other puzzling moments, such as this passage from *All That Is*, in which Philip Bowman—the sort of name that seems to have no provenance—considers with a touch of envy his friends' Jewishness:

As he sat there, Bowman was more and more conscious of not being one of them, of being an outsider. They were a people, they somehow recognized and understood one another, even as strangers. They carried it in their blood, a thing you could not know.... The unimaginable killing in Europe had gone through them like a scythe—God abandoned them—but in America they were never harmed. He envied them. It was not their looks that marked them anymore. They were confident, clean-featured.

Bowman's thoughts on the subject resonate because Salter himself was born James Horowitz and changed his name when he resigned his Air Force commission to become a full-time writer: hardly a secret—he writes about it in *Burning the Days*—but confounding nonetheless in the face of passages like this one (they appear in his earlier books as well) in which fictional men of unspecified WASP lineage seem to be making a progressive effort to overcome their natural aversion to Jews.

One fears, at least in the near term, for the reputation of any artist carrying all this twentieth-century cultural baggage. It would be going much too far to compare Salter's case with that of one of his favorite writers, Ezra Pound; rather, the author whose dilemma most resembles Salter's is probably the late and criminally neglected Southern writer Peter Taylor, who wrote about the glories and tribulations of moneyed white society in the pre-civil rights South in which he was raised. Like Salter,

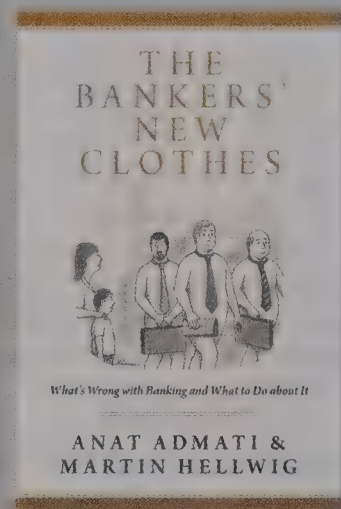
Taylor made his name writing sympathetically about a subculture for which we no longer have much sympathy. (Seven years before his death, in 1994, at the age of seventy-seven, Taylor sat for an interview with *The Paris Review*, where I was then an editor; I remember a small office insurrection over Taylor's use of the archaic term "Guinea nigger.") What saves Taylor's work, in addition to the Jamesian flow of his prose, is the fact that he catches this society not at its apex but in its twilight, at the moment when its confused figures are trying to determine how to survive the death of all they value. Often the luckiest fate he can offer them is to die first.

Something related is happening to Bowman and his contemporaries in *All That Is*; they recognize that the world around them is changing in ways that will leave them behind. Bowman privately opposes the Vietnam War even though his own wartime experience remains the most formative and valuable of his life. Jews are no longer segregated from high society ("no one called them Jewesses anymore"). And women—well, things are changing there in ways useless to resist: "He didn't like women who looked down on you for whatever reason. Within limits, he liked the opposite.... But the city was teeming, the feminist movement had changed it." Women can even be found within a One Percenter refuge like the Century Club:

"They're going to be members here, what's your position on that? ... We're in the middle of the woman thing. They want equality, in work, marriage, everywhere. They don't want to be desired unless they feel like it ... The thing is, they want a life like ours. We both can't have a life like ours."

Perhaps the most undermining change is referred to in the final pages of the book:

The power of the novel in the nation's culture had weakened. It had happened gradually. It was something everyone recognized and ignored. All went on exactly as before. That was the beauty of it. The glory had faded but fresh faces kept appearing, wanting to be part of it.... [Bowman and his colleagues] were



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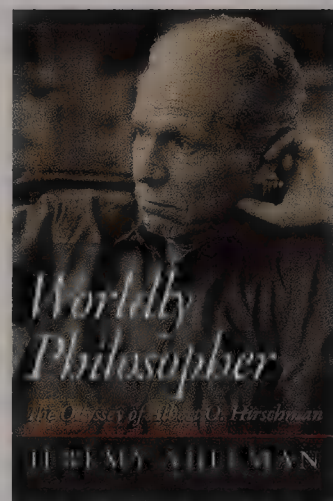
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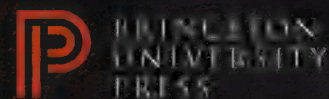
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like nails driven long ago into a tree that then grew around them. They were part of it by now, embedded.

One wonders in retrospect if the Berlands' focus on the "underground river," premature as it may have seemed, wasn't also a kind of protective reflex against seeing their own values grow alien to the world.

Through even the titles of Salter's books—*All That Is, Dusk, Light Years*—runs a belief in the transitory nature of the material world, and of the human passions that illuminate it. That belief remains consistent, but from the vantage of this unexpected late work, it reveals a new aspect. For Nedra and Viri, for *A Sport's* Dean and Anne-Marie, for Vernon Rand of *Solo Faces*, maximum physical grace was a conduit to the notion of eternity, of the world that never changes; *All That Is* is about the world that inescapably does.

Lately Salter has been on a kind of victory tour, collecting various prizes for career achievement: the Rea Award for the Short Story, *The Paris Review's* Hadada Award, the PEN/Malamud Award. He has always been particularly cherished by the reader for whom the pleasures of reading are distinct from the pleasures of story. And he deserves to be read; *A Sport and a Pastime*, in particular, is more eminently than ever one of the best, most sophisticated and moving American novels of its generation. "The poets, writers, the sages and voices of their time," Salter writes in *Burning the Days*,

they are a chorus, the anthem they share is the same: the great and small are joined, the beautiful lives, the other dies, and all is foolish except honor, love, and what little is known by the heart.

We will probably need to get a little more chronological distance from Salter, and from the prejudices of our historical moment, before that sort of impartial judgment becomes available to us. In the meantime, it is gratifying to see him enjoy at least some of the recognition he deserves, and to have the opportunity to feel surprised all over again by the power of his style and the youthful clearness of his eye. ■

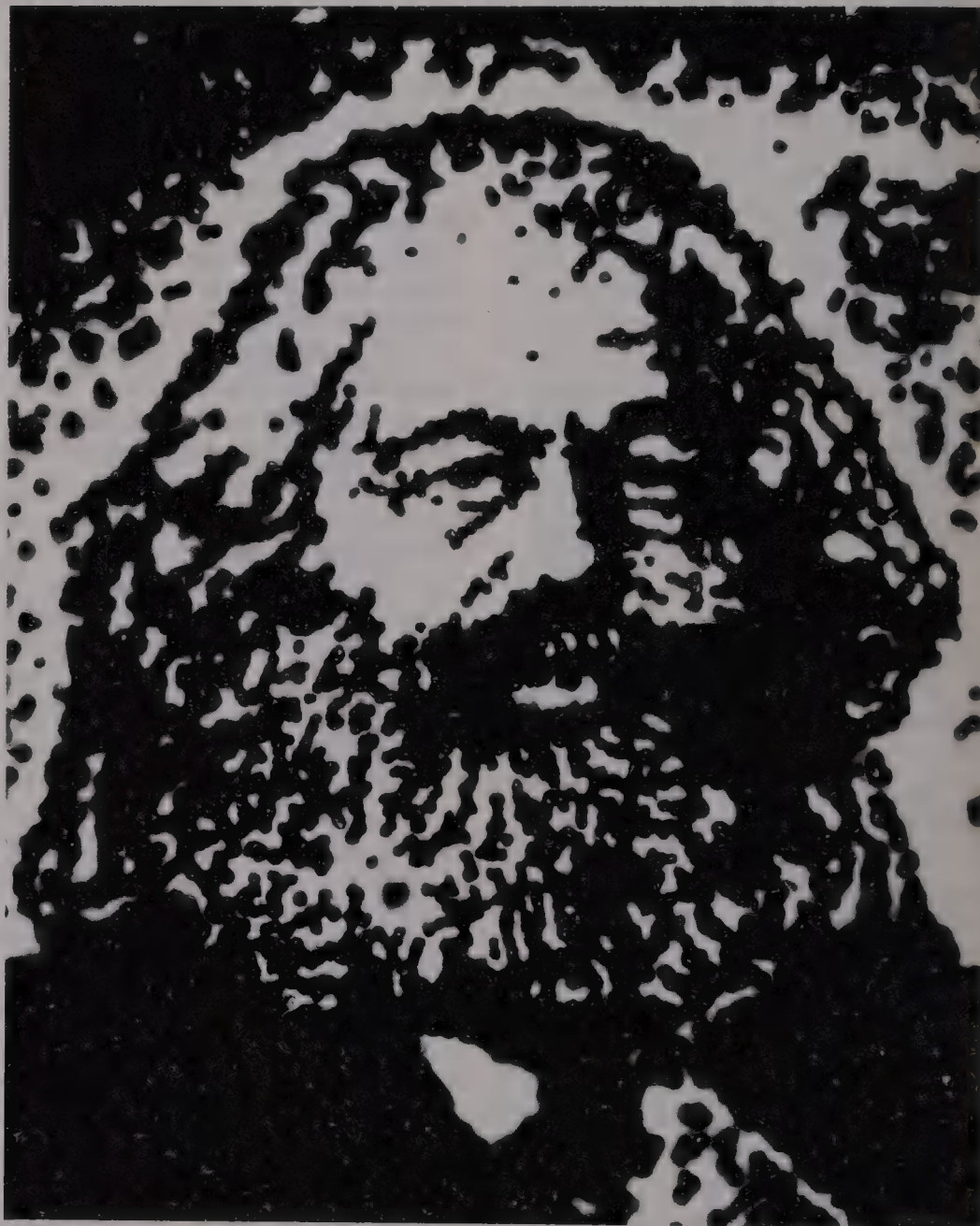
THE REVOLUTIONARY

Is Marx still relevant?

By Terry Eagleton

Discussed in this essay:

Karl Marx: A Nineteenth-Century Life, by Jonathan Sperber. Liveright. 672 pages. \$35. www.norton.com.



Not many of Karl Marx's ideas were original. The concept of communism was known to the ancient world, while the notion of

Terry Eagleton is the author of Why Marx Was Right (Yale University Press). His last article for Harper's Magazine, "Man of the World," appeared in the December 2011 issue.

revolution is probably as old as politics itself. There are those who believe that Marx invented social class, but he himself was not of this party. Perhaps it was the idea of class struggle that he should have patented; but this, too, had long been familiar stuff to harassed mine owners and revolting

peasants, if not always to political theorists. His vision of history as a succession of modes of production was a commonplace of the Enlightenment, and much of his thought was anticipated by Hegel.

What of Marx's conviction that the decisive factor in social life is economic? Even if he was the first to come up with this view, which is doubtful, it is by no means particular to him. There are plenty of Americans who use the phrase "the bottom line" to mean the all-determining question of dollars, which suggests either that most U.S. citizens are natural-born Marxists or that Marx's own view of the question is widely held. Cicero declared that the state existed to protect private property, an orthodox piece of Marxist doctrine. Sigmund Freud, no friend of Marxism, held that without the necessity to labor, men and women would just spend their days in various interesting postures of erotic gratification. It was the need for material survival that spurred them to forsake the pleasure principle for their banks and cotton mills.

Marx, for whom socialism was about not labor but leisure, thought it possible to reorganize our resources so that men and women could be freed as far as possible from the more degrading forms of toil. (Those who have moral objections to having to work should join their local communist parties immediately.) For his fellow socialist Oscar Wilde, they would then be at leisure to lounge around in loose crimson garments, sipping absinthe and reciting Homer to one another. Marx, in a venerable Judaic tradition, was a strenuously ethical thinker, one who grasped the point that morality is mostly a question of learning how to enjoy yourself; men and women, he thought, were at their best when they were able to realize their unique powers and capacities as delightful ends in and of themselves. If everyone were free to do this, however, they would have to find some way of doing it reciprocally. They would need to fulfill themselves in and through the fulfillment of others. Communism for Marx was a kind of political love.

Marx would not have been particularly dismayed, one suspects, to hear

that most of his ideas were unoriginal. This is not because he thought innovation was overrated, but because he thought ideas were. Most prominent Marxists these days are academics, whereas Marx himself never held a university post (though he did have a doctorate in ancient philosophy).^{*} One of Lenin's favorite literary quotations was from Goethe's *Faust*—"Gray is theory, my friend, but ever green is the tree of life"—and one can easily imagine Marx posting the same words above his desk. He was a Romantic humanist with a passion for the sensuously specific; and though he saw the need for abstract concepts, he regarded them as brittle and anemic compared with the rich complexity of the concrete. This was one reason he treated the concept of equality with a certain caution. Glaring social inequalities must of course be abolished, but not in a way that rode roughshod over human differences.

Marx spent much of his life as a radical journalist and political activist, and the purpose of Jonathan Sperber's new biography is to return him to his historical context. In this sense, then, the book is a materialist study of a materialist thinker. Sperber is no dewy-eyed disciple of the master, but treats him rather as Marx treated human beings, seeing him first and foremost as a practical agent. There is, however, a certain paradox here. We are interested in Marx's life because of his work, but Sperber's book pushes his work into the background in order to make room for the life. This is true of most intellectual biographies, which are in this sense a curiously self-defeating genre. Like most historians, Sperber is not at his most impressive in the realm of ideas, though he makes a brave, slightly perfunctory stab at summarizing some of Marx's thought as he goes along.

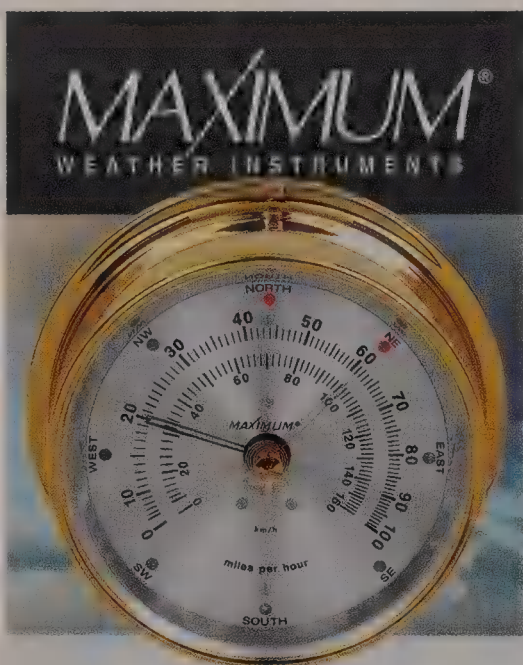
It is true that we can sometimes make discoveries about a writer's life that radically transform our sense of his or her work. If a biography of Thomas Hardy were to reveal that he never clapped eyes on a cow, or a life

^{*} He was rather more qualified for an academic career than W. B. Yeats, who was once turned down for a position at Trinity College, Dublin, because he misspelled the word "professor" on his application.

history of Cardinal Newman were to inform us that he ran a highly successful brothel in his Oxford college, we might well approach their writings with fresh eyes. In general, however, biographies of writers and thinkers do nothing quite so world-shaking. Instead, they tell us what their subject had for breakfast or wore to a fancy-dress ball—facts that are of interest because of what he or she wrote or thought but have nothing whatsoever to do with it. Marx is a rather different case, since he believed in a unity of theory and practice. Even so, there is no simple relationship between Marx's ideas and his material existence.

Born in 1818, Marx was the son of a Jewish lawyer who converted to Protestantism in order to continue to practice law in his anti-Semitic Prussian homeland. Marx's father was a courageous campaigner against bigotry, and would have been pained to learn that his son later declared that "the Israelite faith is repulsive to me." Marx's mother was a Dutchwoman with psychic powers who predicted the time of her own death to the hour. Clairvoyance seems to have run in the family: Marx himself sometimes writes as though the future were predetermined, though he claimed no paranormal powers in order to do so.

As a student of law in his father's footsteps, first in Bonn and then in Berlin, the bohemian young Marx was something of a brawler and boozier. He was, however, just about socially respectable enough to marry Jenny von Westphalen, daughter of a distinguished, aristocratic Prussian family. The pairing looked incongruous to some of their friends, with Marx, a hairy, swarthy commoner of suspiciously Semitic provenance, playing the Beast to Jenny's Teutonic Beauty. He was always rather foolishly proud of his wife's high-class origins, though Sperber suspects that the Westphalens' nobility was somewhat specious. That Jenny was four years older was another scandalous feature of the marriage. As Sperber comments, the union "violated accepted norms of masculinity and of relations between the sexes." Being



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younger than your wife was thought at the time to be shamefully emasculating, rather like being less educated than your valet. Judging from an enigmatic letter sent by Jenny to Karl, the couple also seem to have engaged in premarital sex, which was common enough then among the rural and urban masses but "virtually inconceivable behavior for the very proper daughter of a high Prussian state official from a straitlaced provincial city." Nonconformism clearly began at home, as it did with Marx's later collaborator Friedrich Engels, who took a working-class woman as his mistress. (The fact that she was of Irish origin suggests a marvelously convenient combination of class sympathies and anticolonialist ones.)

The young Marx began his career by securing a post at a radical newspaper in Germany. Journalism was to provide him for the rest of his days with a suitable alternative to academia on the one hand and street-fighting militancy on the other. Still, it took some time for this Young Hegelian to become a fully paid-up Marxist. Five years before he wrote the *Communist Manifesto*, he could be found "advocating the use of the army to suppress a communist workers' uprising." Communist ideas, he wrote, were genuinely dangerous and could "defeat our intelligence, conquer our sentiments." It is as though Darwin had voiced his belief in Adam and Eve on the very brink of publishing *On the Origin of Species*. Having become a Marxist, Marx then famously denied that he was one.

For most of Marx's life, much of his and Jenny's time was devoted to keeping irate creditors from the door. He once commented that nobody had ever written so much about money while possessing so little. His poverty, to be sure, was of a suitably genteel kind. As Sperber notes, "except on one disastrous occasion, he never proposed that Jenny keep house for him." Besides, there was always a slatternly servant or two to be hired. The couple could even rustle up the odd governess for their growing brood. But Marx's knowledge of material scarcity was a good deal more than theoretical. It was a matter of when the butcher was to be paid, not

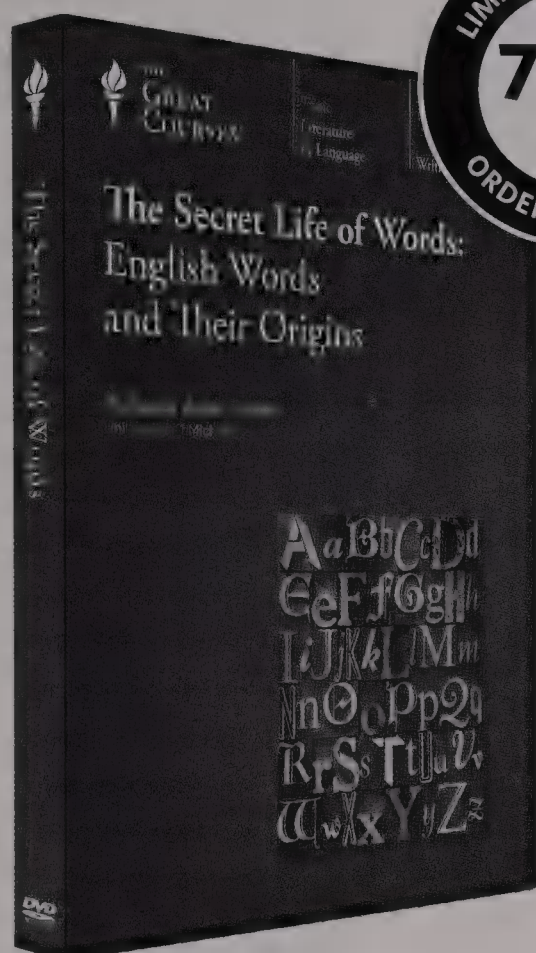
just of the contradictions of capitalism. Three of his children died at birth or in infancy, in tiny apartments and slum neighborhoods. When his daughter Franziska joined this grim company, we are told he "had to spend the day of [her] funeral running around, seeking money to pay the undertaker." It was capitalism that finally rode to his financial rescue in the shape of Engels, philandering son of a Manchester factory owner, who in the days before registered letters existed would cut banknotes in half and send them to his needy colleague in separate envelopes. During his time in England, Marx was also kept afloat by his articles for the *New York Tribune*, then the leading newspaper in the United States.

The politically turbulent Europe of the 1840s meant that this tireless agitator was constantly on the hoof. Expelled from Paris as a political dissident, Marx washed up for a while in Brussels, where he knocked around with other political refugees and formed links with a secret society of artisans. He was arrested and imprisoned by the Belgian authorities and shifted his activities to Cologne. During 1848, the year of European revolutions, his political activism deepened dramatically. Sperber remarks that Marx was, "for the first and last time in his life, an insurgent revolutionary: editing in brash, subversive style the *New Rhineland News*; becoming a leader of the radical democrats of the city of Cologne and of the Prussian Rhineland; trying to organize the working class in Cologne and across Germany." Revolutionaries are often derided for their false prophecies of mass insurgency, but no sooner had Marx forecast such an upheaval in the *Communist Manifesto* than it broke out in one European nation after another. After being expelled from his native Germany, he considered sailing to America but was unable to raise the boat fare. Instead, he went to England in 1849, having swapped one country for another for the last time. The most ferocious critic of industrial capitalism was now in the place where it had all started.

In a London thronging with quarrelsome political refugees, his hopes



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14. Maths, Wombats, and *Les Bluejeans*
15. Foot and Pedestrian—Word Cousins
16. Desultory Somersaults—Latin Roots
17. Analogous Prologues—Greek Roots
18. The Tough Stuff of English Spelling
19. The *b* in *Debt*—Meddling in Spelling
20. Of Mice, Men, and Y'All
21. I'm Good ... Or Am I Well?
22. How *Snuck* Sneaked In
23. Um, Well, Like, You Know
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26. Spinster, Bachelor, Guy, Dude
27. Firefighters and Freshpersons
28. A Slam Dunk—The Language of Sports
29. Fooling Around—The Language of Love
30. Gung-Ho—The Language of War
31. Filibustering—The Language of Politics
32. LOL—The Language of the Internet
33. #\$\$@%!—Forbidden Words
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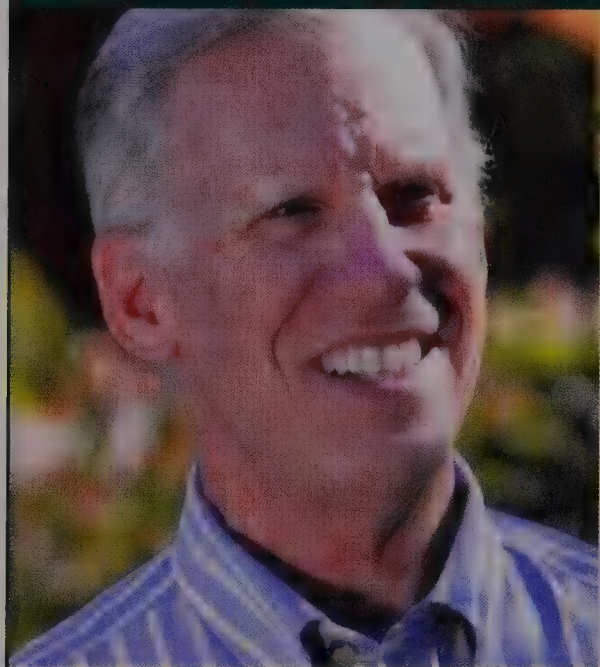
for revolution dashed by the suppression of the Continental uprisings, the penniless Marx found his personal and political isolation complete. For the rest of his life he was to remain stateless, having renounced his Prussian citizenship but having also been refused status as a British subject. If the proletariat, as he declared, knew no homeland, neither did its champion. When Marx announced his support for the Paris Commune of 1871, the British government made it clear

to this interloper that he was unwelcome on their soil. Nonetheless, Marx's reputation grew to the point where he became something of a legend in his own lifetime. Even Queen Victoria dispatched a personal envoy to meet with him, a dignitary with a splendid name not even Dickens could have invented: Sir Mountstewart Elphinstone Grant Duff. Hearing him announced, Marx may well have assumed he was being visited by a committee.

It was in London that Marx produced the work (*Capital*) that made him world famous. He did so, however, with a certain reluctance. Working on "this economic crap," as he once contemptuously called it, was an obligation he felt he owed to those on the sticky end of the capitalist system, but it also kept him from writing his big book on Balzac. In the end, Marx was neither an economist nor a political strategist but a formidably erudite thinker in the great European humanistic tradition. His heart was with Goethe and Heine, not with the ratio of fixed to variable capital. But the high moral conscience of that tradition forced him to suspend his humane pursuits in the name of humanity. Dogged throughout his life by hemorrhoids, rotten teeth, liver complaints, and excruciatingly painful carbuncles, he died in 1883, probably of a mixture of tuberculosis, overwork, and grief at the death of his daughter Jenny, who had failed to reach the age of forty.

The personality that emerges from Sperber's book—jovial, prudish, warmhearted, sarcastic, child-loving, autocratic, vicious in political dispute—is familiar enough from previous studies. Sperber writes of Marx's "intellectual arrogance and tyrannical leanings," as well as of his tendency to "factional pettiness." Where the book excels is in its scrupulously detailed account of its subject from cradle to grave, as well as in its judicious refusal either to demonize or to idealize him. There are a few minor slips. The landowners who ruled Ireland in Marx's day were not English but Anglo-Irish. The British habit of calling police officers "bobbies" died out about half a century ago. The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss was more of a Marxist than Sperber imagines. The sentence "Trier remains today, even as it was in Marx's youth, a very old city" does not display the author at his most intellectually acute. And Sper-

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ber's prose can occasionally be flat-footed, in contrast with the sprightly, witty style of the Englishman Francis Wheen's *Karl Marx: A Life*, which appeared a dozen years ago.

Sperber's account of Marx acknowledges the various influences on his work, from Hegel and Feuerbach to the radical democratic thought of his own day. Yet it gives us little sense of how he brought about a revolution in ideas as well as calling for one in reality. What, then, is truly innovative about Marx? Apart from some rather esoteric reflections on the forces and relations of production, he made at least two strikingly original contributions to human thought. The first was to break with much previous philosophy by viewing individuals primarily as practical agents. That this sounds unremarkable enough is a sign of just how obtuse philosophers can be. What would the human narrative look like, he asked himself, if we were to start from men and women not as contemplative spirits but as self-determining individuals who create a history in common, and who need to do so because of the nature of their bodies? Is there a way of getting from the body's needs and capabilities to politics, ethics, and culture? It is not certain that there is; but to imagine so is a vastly exciting enterprise, one that Marx launched at a disgracefully precocious age in his Paris manuscripts and then more or less abandoned under pressure of his economic inquiries.

Marx's other original move was to identify capitalism as a specific historical system, powered by its own peculiar laws. It was no longer simply the invisible color of everyday life, too close to the eyeball to be objectified. What he did in this respect was exactly what crises of capitalism—like that of 2008—tend to do. Such crises prove embarrassing to those who run the show not only because they involve some people rummaging in trash cans while others fill up their Cadillacs. They are embarrassing also because by throwing the workings of the system into stark relief, they disclose the disagreeable truth that

the system represents one particular way of doing things among a range of other possibilities. If the past did things differently, so might the future. It is far simpler to pretend that the Inca traded in futures just like we do, or that the ancient Assyrians lost sleep over the alarming size of their deficit.

Marx may have shown the limits of the capitalist system, but he was by no means a fanatical opponent of it. In Marx's admiring view, the middle classes had in the brief span of a few centuries transformed the face of the earth and swept the *anciens régimes* into the ash can of history. (It is true that one or two vestiges of that past were carelessly let slip—Prince Charles, for example—but otherwise the job was remarkably thorough.) These sober, prudent creatures had toppled autocracies, freed slaves, dismantled empires, invented human rights, launched feminism and liberal democracy, produced a resplendent artistic culture, and laid the foundations for global community. It was true that they had had their catastrophes: famines, world wars, and the like. Indeed, they had proved not only the most enthrallingly emancipatory force in history but also the most savagely exploitative. Their precious achievements were everywhere steeped in blood. These two aspects of the middle-class capitalist narrative were in Marx's view as inseparable as the two sides of a sheet of paper.

Seizing the wealth-producing machine of the middle classes, Marx believed, was the only way to lay the basis for socialism. You could go socialist only if you were reasonably well-off. Or if you weren't, then some well-disposed neighbors needed to be. Otherwise you would end up with what Marx scathingly called "generalized scarcity," the historical name for which turned out to be "Stalinism." Building up material production from a dismally low level is an arduous task; and if one has eliminated the motive that made such a project so astonishingly successful under capitalism, namely greed, it is likely that a brutally authoritarian state



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
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will need to step in and force people to undertake at rifle point what they would be reluctant to accomplish voluntarily. Marx, whose view of "backward" nations could be at best unenlightened and at worst racist, never imagined for a moment that one could build socialism in an isolated, besieged, destitute society. Socialism would quickly give way to state tyranny. There are those who speak of democratic socialism, but this in Marx's eyes was a tautology. For Marx, nondemocratic socialism was a contradiction in terms, rather like the phrase "business ethics." Socialism was a matter of taking democracy seriously in everyday life, rather than confining it to a purely formal, governmental set of procedures. Human beings might misuse their freedom in this respect, but they were not fully human without it.

Rather curiously, Sperber lavishes a great deal of attention on the work of a man whose ideas he considers irrelevant today. "The view of Marx as a contemporary whose ideas are shaping the modern world," he writes, "has run its course." As a figure, Marx is of historical interest only, and this book has come more to bury than to praise him. It is true that Marx's ideas are no longer exactly shaping the world, but it is also true that they do a lot to explain how capitalism is not in charge of events. The younger generation today may not be made up of card-carrying Marxists, but a sizable chunk of them are increasingly and vociferously anticapitalist. This is not to say that they could give you a cogent account of the Asiatic mode of production. It is rather to say that they are revolted by the prospect of the state using the hard-earned wealth of its citizens to bail out a bunch of financial gangsters, and properly unconvinced that this is the only conceivable way of running a modern economy. In Britain each summer, thousands of young Marxists, some of them workers sacrificing their vacations, gather to discuss the possibility of a less brutal and obscenely inequitable way of conducting our civil affairs.

If Sperber consigns Marx to the museum, it is largely because he thinks the capitalism of Marx's day is too remote from the system we know today to remain relevant. Marx's ideas, he informs us, "belonged primarily to the nineteenth century." But so did Darwin's. The United States has changed immeasurably since the days of Paine and Jefferson; does Sperber regard them too as of purely academic interest? Jesus' ideas descend to us from an even earlier epoch, but few Americans would regard this as good reason to reject them out of hand. Capitalism has indeed undergone some momentous changes since Marx's day. It is more global than it was, more capable of colonizing the inner recesses of the human spirit, even more blatant in its inequalities, and every bit as crisis-racked. The hunt for profit still governs most of the world, giving rise to imperial war, child labor, and stinking slums. The proletariat may no longer be massed in the factories of the West, but its presence is as palpable as ever in the sweatshops of the South and East. We are, in short, as far from lying around in loose crimson garments as we ever were. ■

April Index Sources

1-3 Pew Hispanic Center (Washington); 4,5 Princeton Survey Research Associates International (Princeton, N.J.); 6 Migration Policy Institute (Washington); 7 U.S. Department of Justice; 8-10 Environics Research (Toronto); 11,12 Equal Justice Initiative (Montgomery, Ala.); 13,14 Human Rights Watch (Cairo); 15 National Center for Health Statistics (Hyattsville, Md.); 16 Center for Responsive Politics (Washington); 17 *Harper's* research; 18 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Rockville, Md.); 19,20 Weather Underground (Oakland); 21 Johnson Space Center (Houston); 22 Conference Board of Canada (Calgary); 23,24 Department of Finance Canada (Ottawa); 25 Eric J. Ostermeier, University of Minnesota (Minneapolis); 26 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; 27 U.S. Federal Highway Administration; 28 Yonhap News Agency (Seoul); 29 World Food Programme (Kabul); 30 UNESCO (Montreal); 31 Chinese Household Finance Survey Center (College Station, Tex.); 32 U.S. Department of State; 33 Wells Fargo (N.Y.C.); 34 NPD Group (Chicago); 35 Bowker Books in Print (Novi, Mich.); 36,37 Environics Research (Toronto); 38 Office of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program (Washington); 39 Kevin Dutton, University of Oxford (Oxford, England).

PUZZLE

FOR SHORT

By Richard E. Maltby Jr.

Eight diagram entries are unclued. The letters in the nine circled spaces can be arranged to spell a word that defines what the unclued entries have in common. Enter this word in the spaces below the diagram to complete the puzzle.

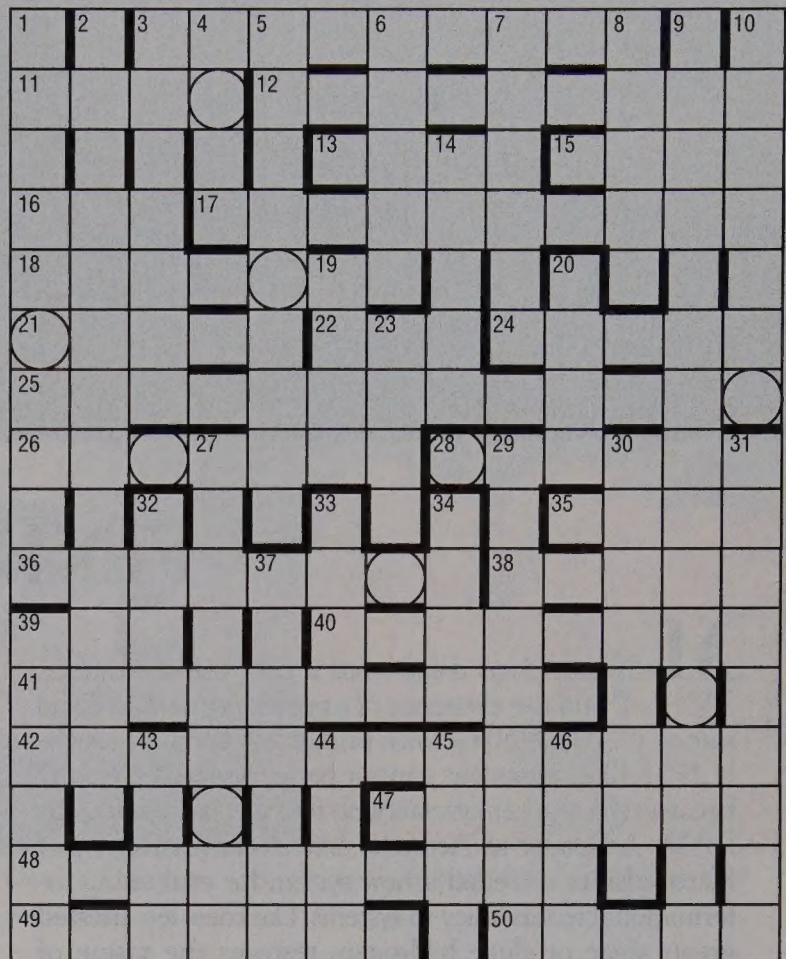
Answers include six proper nouns and one foreign word. 1D is an uncommon word. 40A is a variant spelling. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 78.

ACROSS

3. (see instructions) (9)
11. Word for four years of George Bush (4)
12. I was fired in just one war—Europe (9)
13. Organic compound, only spelled backwards (4)
15. In botany, it covers cutting the second of this month (4)
16. A welcome fish (3)
17. (see instructions) (3,4,3)
18. Swindlers left protected by Hells Angels, e.g. (7)
21. Unpack tiles and place in water (5)
22. Pick top off (3)
24. Gun participant in Winter Olympics? (5)
25. Lionize artist in rehabilitation getting clean (13)
26. In sight of Cyclops, it might help if improper come-on captures Helen's heart (7)
28. Sports fans' Mustangs? Right from start, initially, they're all blue (6)
35. Young person died inside trunk (4)
36. Loafer doesn't need this solace—he needs exercising (8)
38. (see instructions) (5)
39. Bit of animation helps one get canceled (3)
40. Can contents sometimes make you bail out? Take heart! (8)
41. (see instructions) (3,7)
42. Criminal litigants, e.g., circumvent copper, making waves (13)
47. Endless sea found by one astronomer's family (7)
48. (see instructions) (3,7)
49. Nuns are commanded! (7)
50. Second manuscript that is returned—you can find fault in this! (5)

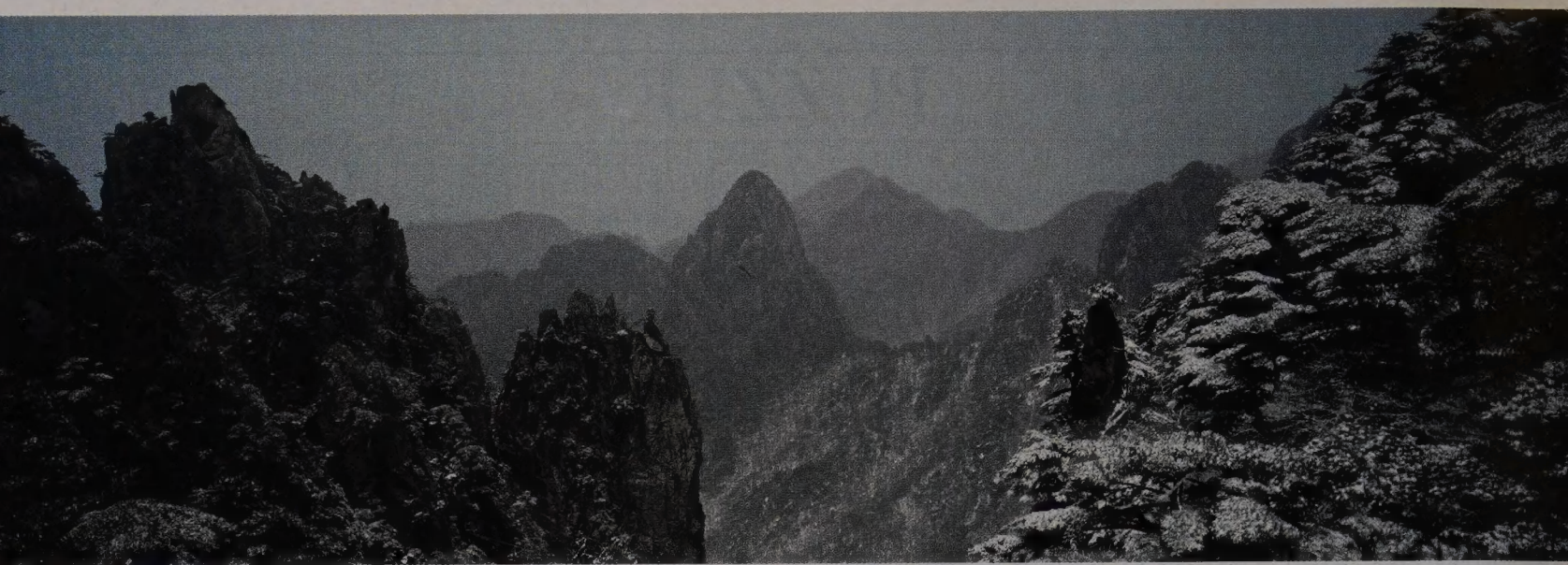
DOWN

1. A squint at miss rubs the wrong way (10)
2. (see instructions) (14)
3. Touching letters from supporter sick with envy (just a tad) (7)
4. Blow off steam, maybe? Time's up! (4)



5. Chestiest models—it's a matter of taste (9)
6. Areas located below California will produce Italian food (5)
7. (see instructions) (6)
8. Lounge with working tycoon (5)
9. (see instructions) (6,2,8)
10. Master again is gross when introduced by relative (7)
14. Victory—it extends into where the wizard is a famous agent (5)
19. List in wind (4)
20. A speaker's excessive—get it on for dancing (4)
23. Cobblers take the heart out of Christmas trees (4)
27. Love poems about designs on a person exaggerate (9)
29. For some parties, a muscle is for flexing (9)
30. Become cultivated? Or returning to supply of cash (8)
31. My singers working together as a group? (9)
32. It's indicated by or generated at first by "hoary" (4)
33. River in South America and a river below it (4)
34. For one who has come out, a bit of testosterone is a liability (4)
37. (see instructions) (7)
39. Taking company private, getting to like a philosopher, I think (6)
43. Sow seen by yokels? (4)
44. Approach finds actor meek? Nothing odd in that! (4)
45. Stick used by intramural athletes (4)
46. Flag showing something round (4)

Contest Rules: Send completed diagram with name and address to "For Short," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by April 12. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine* (limit one winner per household per year). Winners' names will be printed in the June issue. Winners of the February puzzle, "Sentences," are Ambrose Benkert, New York City; Milton Chew, Halifax, N.S.; and Ronald J. Dahlquist, Taylors Falls, Minn.



FINDINGS

Mathematicians discovered a new prime number, $2^{57,885,161} - 1$, and the existence of a pseudoprime that is the sum of 10,333,229,505 known primes and contains roughly 295 billion digits but cannot be represented precisely because the mathematician who found it lacks sufficient RAM. A Reader in Artificial Life at the University of Hertfordshire unveiled a new system for evaluating informational redundancy in systems. Darkness lets stressed green algae produce hydrogen, restores the vision of amblyopic kittens, and makes dogs four times as disobedient. Rats who waken to an induced sodium hunger will consent to taste the usually disgusting saltiness of the Dead Sea. Phosphorus starvation was indicated in cases of huanglongbing, UV fluorescence in carnivorous plants was observed in Thiruvananthapuram by a team under phytochemist Sabulal Baby, and an inexplicable jelly appeared at a bird reserve in Somerset. Researchers discovered how owls crane their necks. "Brain-imaging specialists like me," said a neuroradiologist, "have always been puzzled as to why rapid, twisting head movements did not leave thousands of owls lying dead on the forest floor from stroke." The Rinjani scops owl (*Otus jolandae*) was judged a distinct species from the Moluccan scops owl (*Otus magicus*). Carotenoids enrich the plumage of young male hihi birds. Barn swallows supported the idea that human redheadedness may combat high uric-acid levels. Male Eurasian jays kept from their monogamous partners will on reuniting offer them novel larvae. The obscuration of the ocean's infrasonic rumblings in Jersey Hill, New York, may cause homing pigeons to lose their way. Dung beetles in a planetarium will, in the absence of a moon, navigate their balls by orienting themselves to the glow of the Milky Way. Humans' skin color may no longer be appropriate.

DNA from a man's kiss was found to remain in the mouths of Slovak women for up to an hour, cyberstalking was found more expensive for its victims than

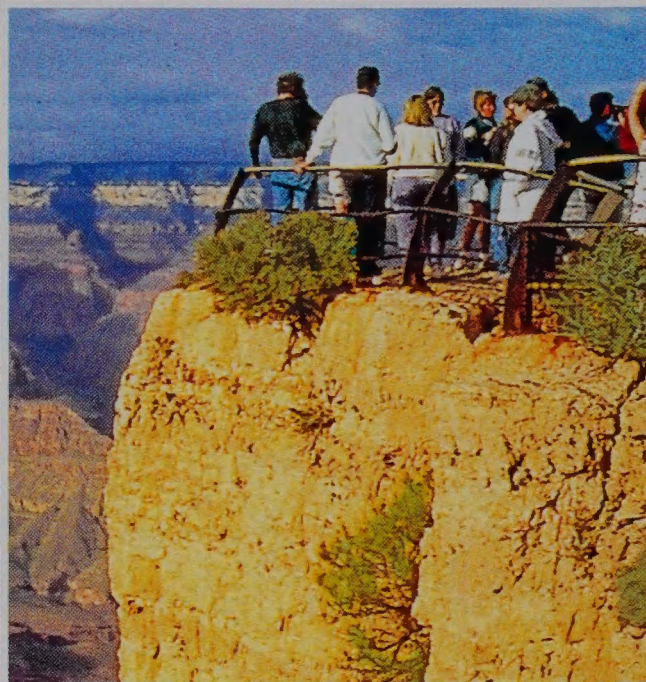
traditional stalking, and doctors finally induced fear in a fearless woman, SM, by partially suffocating her. Humans are unaffected by the misinformation of robot interrogators. Scientists turned a dead sparrow into a robot that provoked living males to fight with it, and reanimated the jaws of dead carp to a maximum bite strength of 700 newtons. The spiritual risks of lowland tapir meat do not deter non-Christian Makushi and Wapishana from its consumption. Conservativeness strongly correlates with a preference for name-brand mayonnaise. Disasters make Sichuanese nine-year-olds more selfless and six-year-olds more selfish. Biomedical engineers conducted a study of freshly failed human hearts. Narcissists tend not, as was previously assumed, to be envious. The hearts of straight couples beat together. A spaceship is better steered by two brains than by one.

A Florida man who claimed to have been bitten by a black mamba was exposed as merely having been bitten by his pet cobra. Embryonic banded bamboo sharks hold their breath in the presence of predators. The Princess of Lake Tanganyika is likelier, under threat of predation, to accept immigrant helper fish who assist with the care of offspring. Dolphins were found to call the names of other favored dolphins from whom they become separated, a misshapen dolphin was reported to have been adopted by a pod of sperm whales, and *Chromodoris reticulata* sea slugs were found, on disposing of their penises, to produce new ones from an internal spool. Marine biologists worried about the picky eating habits of herbivorous reef fish. The world's largest crocodile died of chronic diarrhea. The NIH announced the retirement of its hepatitis-C chimpanzees, and a loggerhead turtle in a Kobe aquarium at last achieved swimming success with her twenty-seventh set of prosthetic fins. "When her children hatch," said the aquarium's director, "well, I just feel that would make all the trauma in her life worthwhile." ■

"Fullmoon@N.Sea," a chromogenic print face mounted on Perspex, by Darren Almond.
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Clockwise from top left: Caravan Tour Map; Bryce Canyon; Grand Canyon; Lake Powell Resort; Monument Valley

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"The whole trip was one wonderful sightseeing adventure. I had no idea how beautiful the area was and how unique each park would be."

—(Client),
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"I thought the sightseeing and all the activities at the Grand Canyon were AMAZING. I loved hiking through the narrows and up the side of a mountain at Zion National Park. All of the hotels were great! I will definitely recommend this tour to all my friends!"

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